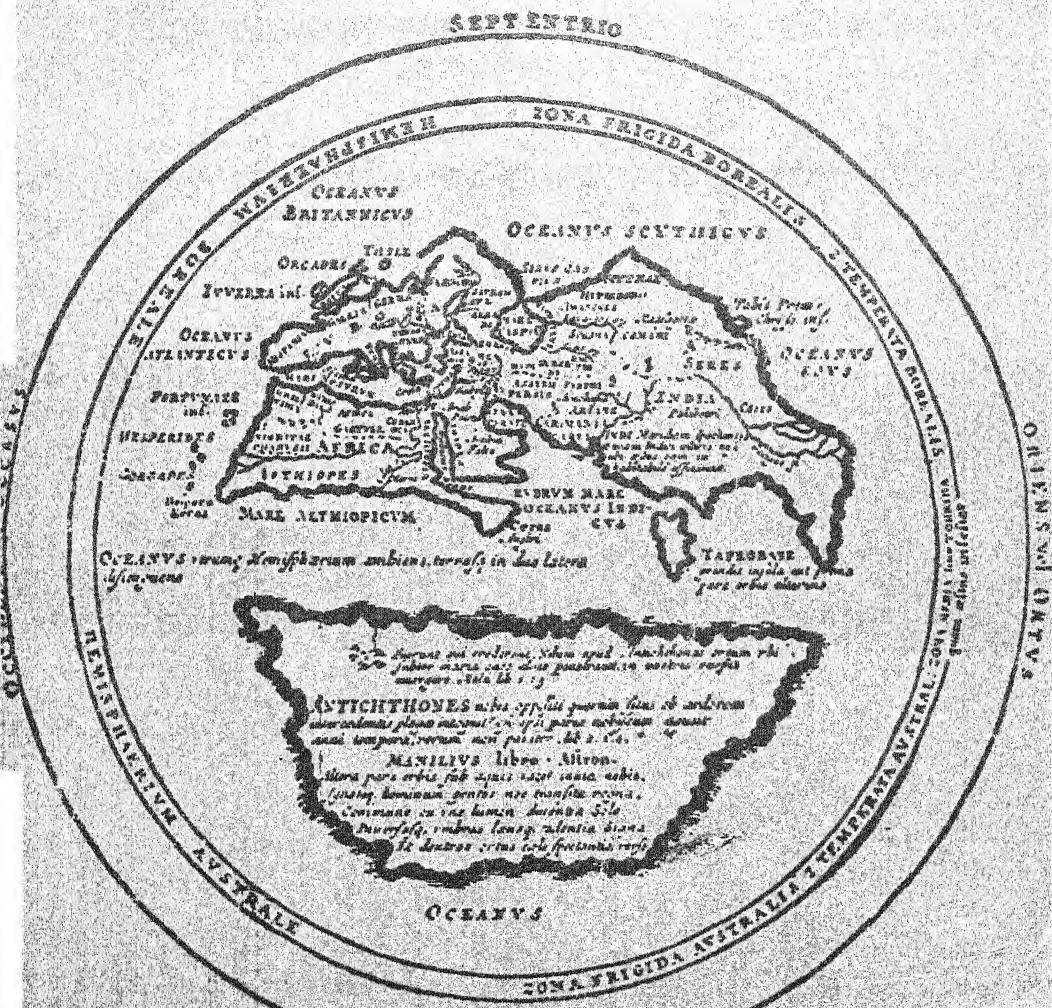


THE WORLD TO 1500



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Introduction

We live in the Age of World History, and as ages go, ours is relatively young. Until the fifteenth century, the many cultures of this earth developed in comparative isolation, their boundaries breached only by occasional traders, by border warfare, and by spectacular mass migrations, such as the “barbarian” invasion of the Roman Empire in the early centuries of the Christian Era. But after Columbus and Cortez had awakened the people of Western Europe to the possibilities, their appetite for converts, profits, and fame was thoroughly aroused and Western civilization was introduced, mainly by force, over nearly all the globe. Equipped with an unappeasable urge to expand and with superior weapons, conquerors made the rest of the world into an unwilling appendage of the great European powers; Africa, Asia, and the Americas became sources of raw materials, markets, objects of scientific curiosity, and places for the permanent settlement of Europeans. The peoples of these continents were, in short, the victims of a ruthless, unrelenting exploitation.

But then came the scientific and technological revolutions of modern times, which, in transforming the Western world, also transformed its non-Western dependencies. We are now witnessing two simultaneous, only apparently contradictory developments. World civilization is becoming more uniform, as the West imposes its techniques and its ideas. And the dependent nations are breaking away from the domination of the West, using these very Western techniques and ideas to establish their separate identities, and find their places in the councils of power. Isolation has become impossible; ancient empires like China and the newly self-conscious nations of Africa alike involve the whole world in their activities. Thus both the traditional division between Western and non-Western history and the patronizing assumption that non-Western is a kind of footnote to Western history have become obsolete. This, as we have said, is the Age of World History. It is therefore supremely the age *for* world history.

The difficulty with most currently available world history textbooks is that they look at this enormous, multifaceted subject from the present backward and from the perspective of Western society. Recognizing that the world is no longer a congeries of unrelated nations and civilizations, the

authors of such books pay lip service to a global conception of history, but more often than not they actually write about the development of Western civilization and discuss other civilizations only as and when they influenced or were influenced by "the West." Typically they trace history from its "roots" in Mesopotamia and Egypt through Greece and Rome and medieval Europe and on to the present, and only begin to pay serious attention to Asia, Africa, and other regions when Western civilization came "in contact" with the cultures of these areas. When they do treat non-Western civilizations as separate entities, they usually attach the material to the main narrative without either relating it to the rest or concerning themselves with the continuity of the histories of these "exotic" societies.

Our approach has been quite different. We have tried to examine human development as it might be studied by a visitor from outer space and also to write our history in a truly chronological way—looking at the whole globe and all its civilizations at each stage of development. Of course we devote far more space to human history than to the remote eons during which the universe and our planet evolved, and more to recent centuries than to ancient times. Generally speaking, the closer our account approaches the present, the more detailed and extensive it becomes. Similarly we devote more space to the history of the West than to other civilizations. We do so partly because more is known about recent times and about the West, and partly because we (and our readers) are modern Westerners. To take an obvious example, we use throughout the Western calendar, dating events backward and forward from the birth of Christ. No other system would be intelligible. Nevertheless, we are writing world history, not merely a history of how the rest of the world has affected us, or we it. Our book is meant to be equally relevant to anyone who can read English, without regard for "race, creed, or national origin." And while it is also designed to be read as a whole, the separate histories of all major civilizations can be followed from their origins on without loss of continuity. Volume I commences with the still-unsolved mystery of the origin of the universe and proceeds through the evolution of the earth and of life and of the human animal to the earliest civilizations. It carries the story down to about 1500 A.D. Volume II treats the emergence of the modern world in the 16th, 17th, and 18th centuries. Volume III attempts (the task becomes increasingly difficult!) to describe the development and interactions of the societies of the world in the last 200-odd years.

World history conceived of in this manner is difficult to write under any circumstances. Surely no individual possesses the factual knowledge or has the "feel" that comes only from deep and prolonged study of a period or culture that are necessary if one is to describe and evaluate all history and all cultures authoritatively. We have dealt with this problem by assembling a

group of experts (forty in number), thus bringing together their special knowledge and insights in a collaborative enterprise. Naturally a history of the world written by forty specialists presents other problems that would not arise in a work by a single author, it runs the risk of becoming a mere collection of encyclopedia articles, held together only by the covers in which the parts are bound. Aware from the beginning of this danger, we sought to surmount it in several ways. First our historians and other experts all know one another personally. Throughout the writing, we were in frequent contact and could repeatedly consult, debate, compare, and criticize in order to fuse our several efforts into a unified intellectual construct. This process went on at each stage of the book's development, over a period of more than five years.

Consider our first and most crucial tasks: the preparation of an outline and the allocation of space to various regions and periods of time. How should the history of the early civilization of India be related to that of Egypt and China or, for that matter, of Mexico and Peru? How many chapters should the history of Africa occupy as compared with that of South America or Eastern Europe? As editors—one a historian of the United States, the other of Western Europe—we knew that any answer we could devise for such questions would be inadequate and surely distorted. We therefore asked our specialists to tell us how they proposed to organize their material and how much space they needed, bearing in mind the ultimate limitation imposed by our decision to produce a work of roughly half a million words. Using draft outlines prepared by the contributors, and consulting with them at every stage, we eventually worked out the structure of our history.

The collaborative effort did not, however, end at this point. Whenever appropriate our authors consulted with one another in order to avoid repetition and omission, and they read and criticized their colleagues' manuscripts in all cases where they had special knowledge, and in many—out of friendship or curiosity—where they did not. Many of the following chapters bring together the writing of two and even three authorities, yet it is our belief that the parts of such chapters fit together as smoothly and as logically as those produced by a single mind.

Finally, our contributors have generously allowed us a remarkable latitude in organizing and editing their manuscripts. Given our common commitment to the production of an integrated synthesis of world history, all conceded that a more-than-ordinary editorial license was essential. Our object as editors has been to try to impose a basic uniformity of approach, to supply connecting passages and cross-references, and to alter the individual prose styles of the authors (without too great artistic loss, we hope) in the interest of creating the illusion not that we two have written what

follows, but that all of us have written it all. It goes without saying, however, that each author has remained the ultimate arbiter of the facts and opinions in his own sections. Each has carefully read and corrected our "final" version.

Our original thought in planning and writing this book was that it was to be aimed at the so-called general reader. Only when the project was well under way did we realize that it might also serve as a text in world history courses. In retrospect, we believe that our original "oversight" was a fortunate one. If we had planned to write a conventional textbook we might have crowded our pages with too many dates, with the names of too many kings and battles and the like, and thus have lost the forest in the trees. Our assumption that our "general reader" would be impatient with enormous masses of detail led us to focus instead on the meaning of events and their broad influences, upon whole civilizations and their patterns of development, upon the shape of world history rather than the billions of discrete facts from which that shape emerges. And of course this is exactly what a world history textbook should also do. Perhaps students can be compelled to learn the names and dates of all the kings of England, and the terms of every major treaty that the many nations of the world have negotiated with one another over the centuries—although we doubt it. More important, they should not be asked to do so. Such matters are part of the history of the world it is true, but they do not help much in making *world history* meaningful. Our book is crowded with facts, but our facts have been chosen to explicate the whole, not simply as ends in themselves.

Consider the matter this way. To answer the question "What is man?" one does not put a slice of human tissue under a microscope, however necessary microscopic study may be in seeking the answer to many questions about man. Similarly, to answer our question, which essentially is "How has mankind fared on this earth?" one must view the history of mankind in its widest outlines. On the other hand, the reader's understanding of world history can and should be greatly increased by the study of selected parts of the whole in greater detail. We assume that instructors will want their students to delve more deeply at many points as they proceed with the subject. Thus, at the end of each chapter we have listed the best available special works on the topics covered. In addition, the instructors' manual designed to accompany this text contains extensive annotated bibliographies, again organized by chapters.

Much of whatever merit this volume possesses it owes to Cass Canfield of Harper & Row. His faith in our idea encouraged us to work out the details, and his generosity enabled us to enlist the services of the many busy scholars whose brains and energies produced this book. He has guided and supported our efforts through countless drafts and around a hundred

unforeseen difficulties Beulah Hagen of Harper & Row has laboriously, patiently, and with a fine intelligence supervised the design of the book and seen our complicated manuscript through the press. Cass Canfield, John Ryden, Mary Lou Mosher, Mel Arnold, and John Gordon, also of Harper & Row, have made important contributions to our project. We are deeply grateful. To thank individually all those who have helped our authors would be impractical in the space at our disposal, we leave that happy task to our colleagues. But we, as editors, wish to extend our loving thanks and appreciation to our wives, Gail Garraty and Ruth Gay, whose critical reading of the manuscript has been of great help and whose support at every stage has been truly invaluable.

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1949

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A HISTORY OF THE WORLD

The World to 1500

Before History

1 The Earth and the Universe

Man, the great seeker, is as time is counted a newcomer to earth, yet his achievements, which we here relate, have been enormous. These achievements, whether for good or for evil, have been without exception the product of his chief distinctive quality, his power of thought.

As long as man has existed, his curiosity, one aspect of his ability to think, has driven him to search out his own origins. For centuries without number, while he has gradually subdued the earth and shaped it to his purposes, he has pondered about his past. The subject has probably occupied the minds of more of the best thinkers the species has produced than any other. The results have been impressive. Indeed, the knowledge that man has accumulated of the prehuman history of the earth, and of the universe of which the earth is a fragment, stands among his most magnificent accomplishments. Back through time and across distances he can measure but not really conceptualize, he has pursued his source. His quest has both inspired and appalled him; it has been relentless, compulsive, unending—and hopeless. We know much, and we know nothing. The origin of what is—man, the earth, the universe—is shrouded in a mystery we are no closer to solving than was the chronicler of Genesis.

Indeed, our best current knowledge, lacking the poetic magic of scripture, seems in a way less believable than the account in the Bible or in any of the ancient texts. All that we can say is that at the time of the beginning there was a large, dense mass of gas. This gas consisted of hydrogen,* the simplest of all the ninety-two chemical elements known to occur naturally. It was very hot, causing an intense light and much expanding motion.

Did this dense mass of gas originate in some prephysical state not open to further physical analysis? Some think it did. But others think that the

* Possibly matter was mixed with antimatter. If so some was hydrogen and some antihydrogen.

dense, hot matter was formed as the result of the contraction of a more tenuous phase of the universe and that it may thus be possible to learn something about earlier phases by detailed measurements and observations. In any case it appears probable that about 10 billion years ago the universe was in the hot and dense state just described and very different from what it is now *

This original mass of gas underwent an evolution; gradually it was differentiated into galaxies, stars and planets. Two physical facts help explain how this happened. If we take a certain amount of a hot gas and let it expand, it will cool down; conversely, if a gas is compressed, it will become warmer, a phenomenon that may easily be demonstrated with an air compression pump. Second, in an extremely dense and hot gas, nuclear reactions can occur between the atoms of the gas. We know that the chemical elements are differentiated by the number of protons, neutrons and electrons in their atoms. Thus, a hydrogen atom consists of a heavy (electrically positive) proton and a light (electrically negative) electron. The next element, helium, consists of two protons, two neutrons, and two electrons. A neutron can be regarded as a combination of a proton and an electron, and so a helium atom can be formed from four hydrogen atoms. This is in fact what happens to hydrogen when its temperature is raised high enough.

At present there is a very large amount of helium in the universe. If we took 100 grams of "typical" matter, we would find about 70 grams of all the other elements combined. The fact that there is so much helium lends support to the theory of a very hot and dense phase early in the history of the universe. This evidence is not conclusive, however, because we also know that within stars like the sun, hydrogen is being transformed into helium even at the present time. But it is doubtful that the helium made within stars during the history of our universe could account for more than a small fraction of the total amount observed.

Because the gas was so hot, there was much light in the original universe. As the universe expanded, this light rapidly became dimmer; yet even now some of the primeval light is probably present. Its intensity and wavelength have been predicted to be such that it should now be best observable at radio wavelengths. Very recently it has been discovered that the earth is in fact irradiated from all sides by radio waves with the anticipated properties. This of course lends support to the picture of an early, very hot, phase of the universe, but other explanations for the radio radiation are perhaps possible.

After the original mass of gas had expanded and cooled, large clouds

* We should mention here that according to the "steady state theory" the universe has always presented about the same aspect. In this theory the apparent evidence for evolution is taken to be due to a local fluctuation.

separated themselves from the parent mass. In the mechanism responsible for this, gravity played an important role. Matter is subject to gravitational forces, but it is also their cause: every object on the surface of the earth experiences a downward gravitational force in proportion to its mass, but it is the matter of the earth that generates this force. If the earth were twice as massive (with the same volume) the force would be twice as large. The original mass of the gas in the universe can hardly have been completely uniform, and so some regions were slightly denser, and generated stronger gravitational fields than others. Since gravity tends to bring matter together, the denser regions tended to become even more compact. Thus the small variations present in the original mass evolved into denser clouds that gradually became separate from the expanding parent mass. From these clouds were later formed the galaxies as we see them today, each galaxy containing billions of stars and some gaseous matter.

At the conclusion of the first phase of the history of the universe, numbers of huge clouds composed of hydrogen and helium had become separate entities and so could start their own independent evolution. Again, these turbulent clouds contained variations, and, as before, the variations grew in importance as time went on; the clouds broke up into smaller and smaller subunits until ultimately "cloudlets" with masses like those of the sun and stars had become distinct. Gravity caused these cloudlets to contract and become denser. The increase of the pressure resulting from the contraction of the cloudlets caused the temperature to rise until they became luminous or, to put it simply, until they became stars.

The temperature inside stars is so high that nuclear reactions take place, transforming hydrogen into helium. It is the energy generated by these reactions which enables the sun and the stars to continue shining for very long times—about 10 billion years in the case of the sun. Some stars, however, are much more luminous than the sun and convert their hydrogen more rapidly. The analysis of the evolution of stars that have changed most of their hydrogen into helium shows that they will become dense and hot enough for more complicated nuclear reactions to occur, like those which change helium into carbon. A carbon atom consists of six protons, six neutrons, and six electrons, and so it can be built from three helium atoms. Other reactions make oxygen, and ultimately even elements like silicon and iron. In fact, it appears that nuclear processes within stars can lead to the formation of all the natural chemical elements.

In the evolution of our particular galaxy, the first massive stars that were formed from the gas evolved very quickly. After they had synthesized many of the heavier elements they reached the end of their lives and some exploded. (Such exploding stars are also seen today as supernovae, stars that suddenly flare up to tremendous brightness and then disappear.) The

explosions ejected the elements that had been synthesized into the gas remaining in the galaxy. From this gas stars were again formed, among them our sun. This sequence of events explains why the sun does not consist only of hydrogen and helium, but contains also an admixture of other elements.

The mass of gas from which the sun formed slowly rotated, like most gaseous masses in the universe. A rotating body tends to be flattened. When the sun formed, some of the rotating matter remained behind in a flattened disk around the sun. At first the sun was not very hot, and so the material in the disk also remained cool. In this cold gas the various elements began to form molecules and other compounds. Some of these were rather sticky and coagulated first to form small dustlike particles, later, even larger units. Once a few larger units had been formed, gravity tended to bring in more matter until eventually bodies of planetary mass were formed. Meanwhile, the contraction of the sun triggered nuclear reactions. Its temperature increased so that it became luminous and began to heat the surrounding matter. This did not have much effect on the more massive planets far from the sun, like Jupiter and Saturn, but in the smaller planets closer to the sun the temperature rose enough for the volatile substances like hydrogen and helium to evaporate. Only the solids remained behind, and these compacted into the earth and surrounding planets as they exist today.

Most of the early material around the sun accumulated in the planets, where subsequent processes have changed it beyond recognition. Some of it, however, escaped the gravitational attraction of the planets and has remained relatively unchanged. It is almost certain that comets are made of this primitive material, and thus the study of them offers many exciting possibilities. Most comets remain far from the sun, but occasionally one ventures close to it. The sun's heat then causes the evaporation of some of the more volatile substances, giving rise to the spectacular comet tails.

In the neighborhood of the earth some other objects formed from the primitive material. One of these, the present moon, apparently was captured by the earth in a stable orbit. The surface of the moon is covered by craters, most of which must have been caused by the impact of pieces of solid celestial debris. These craters thus give visible evidence of the latest phases of the formation of the moon and planets by accumulation of partly solid material.

In the past the moon must have been very close to the earth. After the oceans had condensed on the surface of the earth the moon raised tides in the same way as at present, except that the tides were much higher because of the closeness of the moon. The tides correspond to a periodic rising and lowering of the water in the ocean. In shallow parts of the ocean strong

tidal currents rush over the ocean floor which, in turn, resists them. Through these frictional forces the moon has a "grip" on the earth, and since the earth rotates faster than the moon revolves around the earth, the moon tends to lessen the rotation speed of the earth. In fact, it is probable that the original earth rotated about six times faster than at present, corresponding to a "day" of four (present) hours.

If one body experiences a force from another the converse must also be true. Thus, as the rotation of the earth slowed down, the moon's motion was also affected. The net effect has been an increase in the distance between the earth and the moon. As this distance increased, the tides became lower and the associated effects less significant. But even from observations made during historic times, in particular the observations of solar eclipses in antiquity, the lunar tidal effects can be demonstrated.

The matter from which the earth and the moon was formed was rather cold. But its compression during the formation of these bodies led to heating. Also, radioactive materials were present in the original material, giving the earth a rather hot interior. In earlier theories the internal heat of the earth was taken as evidence for the formation of the earth from hot material ripped out from the sun by some catastrophic event. It seems clear now, however, that this was not the case, because such hot material never could have condensed into planets. The hot gas would have expanded rapidly and become completely dispersed.

This, in rough outline, was the probable sequence of events that led to the formation of the earth from an original featureless mass of hydrogen. Not all steps in this sequence are yet completely certain, but it is unlikely that future observations will change our basic conclusion that the almost incredible diversity of galaxies, nebulae, stars, planets, and other objects present in our universe originated in a very simple state, and that the historical developments that led from this initial state to the complexities of the present universe were produced by phenomena that can be understood on the basis of modern physics.

Our galaxy is about 10 billion and our solar system about 5 billion years old. Having some knowledge about the past, we are tempted to speculate about the future. The sun will continue shining for another 5 billion years. After that it will brighten rapidly and also become very large, perhaps large enough to engulf the earth. Following a comparatively brief period of high luminosity, the sun will then dim and the solar system will become dark and cold. It seems probable that the same fate will befall the other stars in our galaxy; all that will remain are large swarms of "dead" stars and planets.

Will new galaxies form again? The answer is unknown. Some believe that the present expansion of the universe will come to an end and that a

period of contraction will follow. It is conceivable that as a result the universe will once again be brought into a dense hot state and that the evolutionary history of the present phase of the universe will be repeated.

For Further Reading

Abell, G., *Exploration of the Universe*

Jastrow, R., *Red Giants and White Dwarfs.*

Motz, L., and Duveen, A., *Essentials of Astronomy.*

Struve, O., and Zebergs, V., *Astronomy of the Twentieth Century.*

2 The Geological Evolution of the Earth

When we look at the scenery of our planet there is much to delight the eye. A region of great natural beauty can be aesthetically enjoyed without asking: "How did it get that way?" Nevertheless, this question often comes to mind. It is particularly prompted by sights such as the Grand Canyon, the high Alps, the fjords of Norway, or the volcanoes of Japan.

The answer is generally to be found in looking at the land in *three dimensions*. If we stand on the rim of the Grand Canyon after crossing mile upon mile of nearly flat plain, we can see a slice cut into the crust of the earth right down to the oldest rocks. In our imagination we can cut a similar profile through any plain or mountain range and see the rocks in this third dimension. The golden rule of the bedding of sediments says that the rocks at the bottom are the oldest and those at the top are youngest. Even if the structures are tilted or folded by mountain building one can still follow the layers out to where a clear succession is discernible.

The third dimension is thus no great problem. It can be and is checked and confirmed repeatedly by geologists looking for oil or for water. But to recapture in our imaginations a picture of the ancient geography, we must also introduce a *fourth dimension*: time. We can strip away the younger rocks down to a certain level and visualize how that formation was originally deposited as sediments in the ocean. By collecting fossils and studying the type of rock, we can come up with a vivid picture of the ancient scene. Two fundamentally different kinds of rock exist—sedimentary, those laid down as particles of mud or sand in ancient oceans; and igneous, those erupted or intruded into the earth's crust in a molten state, as in volcanic lava. By plotting their distribution on paleogeographic maps for

Geochronology of the Planet Earth

ERA	PERIOD	EPOCH	TIME OF BEGINNING (millions of years ago)	GEOLOGICAL EVENTS
ARCHEOZOIC PROTEROZOIC	Precambrian (periods)	(many minor sub-divisions, but not of world-wide validity)	4,600	Origin of earth and solar system
			(?)4,000	Origin of life, in reducing atmosphere
			(?)2,500	Photosynthetic oxygen permitted first global oxidation of iron ores
			(?)1,500	First primitive animals
			700	Great "Eocambrian Ice Age"
PALEOZOIC	Cambrian		600	First shell-forming invertebrate animals (attributed to rising alkalinity of ocean)
	Ordovician		500	Ice Age in Africa
	Silurian		435	Caledonian mountain building
	Devonian		395	Acadian mountain building
	Carboniferous	Mississippian	345	Great Coal Age, reduction of CO ₂ and rise in atmospheric oxygen
		Pennsylvanian (subsystems)	310	Hercynian-Appalachian mountain building
MESOZOIC	Permian		280	Ice age in South America, Africa, Australia, India, and Antarctica; extinction of much Paleozoic life
	Triassic		230	Beginning of major continental drifting
	Jurassic			Age of Reptiles begins; world-wide red beds
			180	Age of Ammonites; mild world climate
	Cretaceous		135	Age of Chalk (planktonic foraminifera), extinction of much Mesozoic life
CENOZOIC	Tertiary	Paleocene	67	Alpine mountain building (world-wide, and continuing through Tertiary)
		Eocene	58	
		Oligocene	36	
		Miocene	25	Evolution of grasses and "modern" type mammals and birds
		Pliocene	7	Increasing mountain glaciation
	Quaternary	Pleistocene	2.0	"Great Ice Age," time of Stone Age Man, growth of major deserts
		Holocene	0.01	"Recent" development of agricultural, industrial, and literate man

each period of the geologic past we can reconstruct a pictorial record of our planetary history.

Every continent in the world possesses three basic types of structure. First, there is a very old nucleus of strong, hard crystalline "Precambrian" rocks (granites and related types), which are from 600 million up to several billion years old; this is called the shield. In North America it outcrops mainly in Canada; in Europe its equivalent extends from Scandinavia to Russia; in South America it lies in Brazil. Most of Africa is a shield, and so are India, Australia and Antarctica. Second, there are mountainous belts of folded sedimentary rocks of all ages, often with patches of volcanic formations and perhaps a core of granite; these are the fold belts. The shield actually consists of very ancient fold belts that have been worn down through erosion by rain and rivers. The younger folds, however, are still mountainous. The Appalachians of North America were folded between 400 million and 280 million years ago; folds of the same age occur in Europe and each of the other continents. The Rockies have a core of Precambrian shield rocks, but these were all dismembered by fracturing and are now overlapped or wrapped around by folds that are mostly dated about 100 million years. The Coast Ranges are younger, however, and it is evident that they are still growing, as is the entire border of the Pacific, with its constant earthquakes and lines of volcanoes—"the Girdle of Fire."

Third, there are the basins, which are plainland regions superimposed on the shield; they have slowly subsided at various times, and sediments have filled them up. Since the surface of any water body (lake or ocean) is horizontal, sediments can fill the basin to become a flat plain. Most of the great plains, the steppes and prairies of the world, were formed like this.

The shape of the land surface, i.e., its physical scenery, depends on its structural framework, its constituent rock types and the relative relief or degree of uplift, and also on the climatic history (its *inherited* features) and the soils that are produced by the climate and vegetation working together.

The history of each and every continent goes back to the early beginnings of the planet earth itself, about 4.5 billion years ago.

The ancestral earth did not possess an atmosphere such as we have today. Hot spots in the earth must have melted and volcanoes broke out on the surface, spreading lava on the land and liberating vast quantities of steam, but the steam condensed and from a few water droplets to start with, the great oceans have evolved. Rain falling on the rocks caused solution, thus furnishing salts. The once fresh ocean has gradually become salty so that today it contains 3.5 per cent of dissolved salts.

In reckoning time for million-year periods two systems are employed—"absolute" and "relative." Absolute time (in years) is worked out by

analyzing a given radioactive element, such as uranium, which breaks down eventually to lead; the geochemist knows the rate of this breakdown, so he measures the ratio of uranium to lead in a certain rock and thus calculates its absolute age. All the different methods agree that the age of the earth is 4.5 billion years. Relative time measurement is a "common-sense" procedure based on the sequence of sediments laid down on the floor of the ocean. If we bore a hole in the ocean bed, the top samples obtained are the youngest; the bottom ones are the oldest. If we run absolute dating analyses of these samples, we get a double check on both methods. Fossils found in the older formations are more primitive than those found in the recent layers. Each epoch or age is characterized by a distinctive "assemblage" or "community" of fossils, so that anywhere in the world a correlation can be made. This extraordinary attribute was discovered by a modest English canal builder, William Smith, in the early nineteenth century—"Strata" Smith, founder of modern stratigraphy.

For many years geologists have been hunting to find the oldest rocks of the crust. Generally such rocks are covered over by younger sediments, so it is not an easy search. The oldest patches of crust found thus far are dated at more than 3 billion years.

From time to time during the geological history of the earth there have been periods of violent disturbance, marked by tremendous and repeated earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and vast movements of the crust. In one belt the crust may have split apart and formed a new branch of the ocean. In another belt that formerly lay under the ocean, there was uplift of the land and mountains were formed. In these new mountain belts the layered and fossil-filled sediments of the ocean were folded, wrinkled, and buckled, but where rivers have carved deep valleys and canyons through them, geologists can now collect specimens of the fossils and work out the former sequence, which otherwise would be hidden beneath the sea. Through time, continents have grown in dimensions by successive addition of the new mountain belts, but the oceans too have grown in volume. The net result has been a planet of increasing complexity through time. While some "recycling" of materials goes on, the so-called steady-state principle, history does not repeat itself. New formations are added to old ones, so that earth history is cumulative and irreversible. This unending history of erosion on the one hand compensated by uplift on the other was first recognized in 1795 by James Hutton of Edinburgh as the great "geological cycle."

On the present-day coast we know how the tide rises and falls every day. In exceptional places, as in the Bay of Fundy in eastern Canada, the tide rises up to 50 feet. On a different scale, in geological time, over the course of millions of years, the ocean has periodically risen and fallen, flooding the land, only to retreat once more, leaving behind layers of fossil-

filled sediments. This happened again and again throughout geological history. We are not sure just why it happens. Is it because of continental drift or changes in the polar positions? Changes in the speed of rotation of the earth? Changes in the actual size of the solid earth? Changes in the amount of water in the oceans? (During ice ages, water is removed and converted into ice.) All of these causes are probably involved, which makes it difficult to say which is most important.

The sequence of geologic time can now be measured, as mentioned above, in years; but numbers are difficult to remember, and in any case in the early days of geological science, the absolute method had not been invented, so it was convenient to pin name labels on rocks of the different ages. Thus the principal rock of New York City is called the Manhattan Schist, in northern Illinois we have the St. Peter Sandstone, around San Francisco there is the Franciscan Series. In England there is the London Clay, in Paris there is the Montmartre Gypsum. This naming is especially convenient since it is an insurance against any possible error in dating; the name will still identify the rocks regardless of date.

In geological names there is a hierarchy of labels for time divisions of decreasing importance or size, like a chain of command in the army. The top division in historical geology is the era, a time covering tens to hundreds of million years. Periods, epochs, ages, follow in descending order. The names are generally selected from either a descriptive feature or some state, mountain, or river where those particular rocks were first discovered. Some of the earliest names selected were also partly descriptive, suggesting the types of fossils or the character of the rock material.

Many of the basic geological principles were first worked out in Britain, and the oldest fossiliferous rocks there are found in north Wales; Cambria is the old Latin name for Wales, so these rocks were called Cambrian. The older shield rocks there are largely devoid of fossils, so were simply labeled Precambrian, and this name has stuck. All over the world, rocks more than 600 million years old are still called Precambrian.

In the younger rocks the fossils fall into characteristic groupings, and the parent rock eras were named accordingly—Paleozoic (“era of old life”), Mesozoic (“era of middle life”), and Cenozoic (“era of young life”). The number of divisions increases as we come closer to the present in geological time; with each younger era there is a slight change of scale, corresponding to greater and greater complexity. Thus the lengths of an era or period are not fixed, but divisions are simply drawn where they are appropriate.

The Precambrian Era. Because the oldest (Precambrian) parts of the earth's crust have been involved in a great deal of mountain building, melting, and general disturbance to the original sediments, they present

great difficulties to the fossil hunter. Precambrian fossils have now been found in a number of places, but never fossils of highly advanced types. Generally they range from mere bacteria, to seaweeds, to primitive segmented animals like worms. These were soft-bodied organisms, if they had shells or some sort of hard parts it would be much easier to find them, but when soft-bodied creatures die, usually they are quickly destroyed by bacteria. It is only when an accidental event such as a quick burial by floods has interrupted decay that they have been preserved by fossilization.

The primitive algae (seaweeds) played an important role in the history of the earth. In early planetary evolution the atmosphere was poisonous to animal life, but bacteria and plants thrive on carbon dioxide, which is a gas given off with the clouds of steam by volcanoes. The plants, for their part, produce oxygen as a waste product. In the early history of the planet there was no oxygen, but gradually the plants produced enough of this by-product so that animals could evolve. Thus living organisms have given us our life-sustaining atmosphere.

How did life itself begin? According to one hypothesis, the early atmosphere may have been like that of Jupiter and other major planets today, condensed around the new planet during its formation. Another view suggests the emergence of the gases from the interior or by weathering of minerals. It may have contained hydrogen, ammonia, sulfur dioxide, methane, and some other inorganic hydrocarbons such as cyanide (HCN). Volcanic eruptions brought in steam that condensed to water and carbon dioxide. Clouds formed, rain fell, there were storms . . . lightning flashed. . . . Thinking about this problem, the Nobel prize-winning scientist, Harold Urey, mentioned to one of his students, Stanley L. Miller, that this mixture of materials could be duplicated in their chemistry laboratory. No sooner said than done: they set up a container with the right mixture of gases and subjected them to artificial electric sparks to simulate lightning. In a week a little red liquid started to form; analyzed, this was found to contain amino acids, the basic building blocks of organic life. From these sorts of compounds, by whatever method, it is generally believed that life began in shallow pools on the earth's surface, as a so-called organic soup.

A great age of biological experimentation was thus started in modern science, but it is evident that a still greater biological experiment had started on the earth's crust somewhere far back in Precambrian times. This first life may have appeared nearly 4 billion years ago. Evolution from these simple beginnings (organisms at the bacteria level) has probably been in the course of multiple experiments by nature; the most viable for any given time and place have triumphed. The secret is the infinite number of combinations for the carbon atom and its molecules that are possible over immense periods of time.

Geological studies of the fossil record of these last 4 billion years showed that evolution has continued without a breakup until today, recognizing a "principle of biologic continuity," which means that no science fiction collision with passing planets is permissible. Evolving life would have been wiped out. But the record is clear; there never has been a total write-off, followed by a restart. Geologists therefore recognize a "law of uniformity," which means that although there have been quite revolutionary "ups and downs" in earth history, conditions were *more or less* uniform through time. This principle goes hand in hand with another—the "law of actualism"—which states that the laws of physics and chemistry are timeless and we use present-day processes as our clues for interpreting the past. We reject the miraculous.

Only after a long period did the first plants start to evolve, and with them, through photosynthesis, free oxygen became available for the first time in the earth's atmosphere about 2.5 billion years ago. The tracks of wriggling worms preserved in the old sediments and the impressions of jellyfish and other primitive but oxygen-demanding animals thus appear only relatively late in Precambrian time. Extensive deposits of iron oxide ores were also formed at about this time in many parts of the globe. Older iron minerals are mainly the (oxygen-free) sulfides. Accordingly, by now there must have been abundant free oxygen in the atmosphere. The plants had done their work in creating a livable world for the eras of fantastic animal evolution which lay ahead.

Climatic conditions during the Precambrian were, for the most part, very similar to those of the present day, for the natural processes cannot operate except in the presence of water, which may not be either boiling or frozen. Nevertheless, several ice ages occurred during the Precambrian, and we believe these were related to periodic shifting of the continents with respect to the earth's rotational axis. This shifting is known as "continental drift," a still somewhat mysterious process whereby the earth's crust slowly migrates over a molten layer beneath.

The Paleozoic Era. With the end of the Precambrian 600 million years ago the foundations of the continents were well and truly laid. The Paleozoic Era began. The Paleozoic sea washed in over the continents again and again at intervals of millions of years, withdrawing from time to time only to transgress once more.

The records of these events are the sedimentary rocks. Very clear and richly fossiliferous sediments faithfully record the great transgressions across each continent. Certain less stable areas became basins and slowly subsided, so that today we can measure 5,000 to 10,000 feet of sedimentary thickness in them. Other "arches" or "domes" in the basement remained stubbornly resistant, and though the seas often washed over them, they did not subside and remained as islands.

Throughout the Paleozoic Era the equator lay across the United States, and the North Pole was situated somewhere beyond Hawaii with the South Pole in Africa. Rich fossil remains tell us of warm waters in America and Europe, and in the second half of the era land plants evolved to help cloak the earth and enrich the coastal swamps. Now developed the great flying insects, followed by the first amphibians (that evolved from the fish), and the earliest reptiles.

Six great subdivisions are recognized in the Paleozoic; in sequence they are the Cambrian period (as mentioned earlier); Ordovician (named for an ancient tribe of Wales); Silurian (named for a similar tribe in Wales); Devonian (named for the English county); Carboniferous (named for its coal formations; in the United States, two subperiods—Mississippian and Pennsylvanian—are often recognized); Permian (named for the district of Perm in the Urals of the U.S.S.R.) In time the era ranges from 570 million to 230 million years

The Mesozoic Era. A great world-wide continental break-up in the late Paleozoic heralded the Mesozoic Era, which began about 230 million years ago. Fossils of the common Paleozoic forms of life disappeared almost completely, while a few vigorous survivors started to build up new geological lines. Life on land was dominated by the great reptiles, the dinosaurs, from which evolved also the flying reptiles. In the oceans and lakes there were swimming or wading reptiles, and the lowly forms of life: clams, corals, sea urchins. The ammonites (the coiled mollusks—the cephalopods, meaning “head in the foot”) were the most remarkable of these lower animals because of the intricate convolutions of their shell patterns; careful study of these patterns makes it possible for geologists to place rock formations, containing ammonites, in their exact age order.

Three great subdivisions are recognized in the Mesozoic—the Triassic (named for a distinctive threefold division observed nearly two centuries ago in northern Europe), the Jurassic (after the fine outcrops in the Jura Mountains of Switzerland), and the Cretaceous (after the celebrated English chalk deposits, *Kreta* being Greek for limestone).

In North America the climate remained tropical, for the equator still lay across the country and the Triassic North Pole was situated somewhere near Japan. Accordingly, the soil of that time in America was red with iron oxides like the tropical soils of today. Extensive lakes, deltas, and swamps were the sites of “red beds” and were the homes of free-roaming dinosaurs that lived off the lush vegetation on the marshy shores. Generally the hinterland was dry; sand dunes built up in the deserts. In places lagoons were cut off from the sea and became the sites where salt and gypsum were deposited from the evaporating brine.

The Jurassic Period seems to have been a time of world-wide mild climatic conditions, marked by lush vegetation. No ice sheets covered the

poles, both of which were situated in ocean areas (western Pacific and southern Indian Ocean) and thus equable currents prevented any extensive freeze-up. The equator of the time passed over what is now the southeastern United States, and so the climates were either warm and humid or else, in the more continental parts, hot and dry.

With the Triassic and Jurassic came the beginnings of one of the most extraordinary periods of geologic history—the pulling apart of the continents to form the Atlantic and Indian oceans. Where there had been low swampy plains and shallow basins of evaporating salts, there now appeared new branches of the deep ocean. Geologists are not quite sure how it came about. Was the earth's crust stretching—so that open splits became new ocean basins? Or was it merely thinning—resulting in the down-dropping of crustal hunks or segments the size of the Gulf of Mexico? Energetic exploration programs are attempting to bring light on these questions. Results indicate that both suggestions are right—in different places. The ocean floor in the mid-Atlantic is now known to be spreading apart at the rate of about two inches per year. Turning back the clock to the Triassic period shows that the site of the present Atlantic was then closed. Land animals could walk from North America to Europe and from South America to Africa, and even into Antarctica and Australia. It seems that there were just two giant continents—“Laurasia” in the north, “Gondwanaland” in the south. They were probably separated by a proto-Mediterranean, “Tethys,” of variable width.

Deep fractures along the lines of the ancestral mountains initiated volcanic centers. Rotting vegetation in the sediments provided a trap for rising solutions that also came up these fractures, bringing in uranium, the great nuclear fuel potential of the future.

With the Cretaceous Period a new world-wide trend appeared, the appearance of microscopic marine plants and animals that formed shells of lime (calcium carbonate); the resultant formations are the white chalk, famous in England, but equally widespread in many parts of the world, from Texas to Australia. As in the Jurassic there were no glacial regions and the oceans were universally warm. The sea level was high and rose still higher during the period, so that the broad gulfs further invaded the continents, dividing the world into giant islands.

In many ways, the Cretaceous was a golden age for the creatures of the earth. Mild conditions were universal, but toward the end of the period new mountain-building upheavals disturbed the tranquillity. From the Alps to the Himalayas, from the Rockies to the Andes, new belts of volcanoes and folded mountain ranges emerged. The end of the Mesozoic era, like the end of the Paleozoic, was marked by widespread extinctions.

What mysterious blight wiped out so many organisms at the end of the Mesozoic? Some argue that it was due to polar shift and climate change,

and the drier conditions did not favor the tropical vegetation that was their food. Others point to the widespread mountain building with its volcanoes and attendant dusts and poisonous gases. Yet others speak of excessive radiation fatally damaging the gene structures, such heavy doses of radiations are to be expected whenever the poles of the earth's magnetic field reverse, as they do periodically, or when novae explode somewhere in the universe. Another type of explanation stresses biological causes. universal epidemics or parasites or predatory mutual extinction or "race exhaustion."

It is an ecologic law that an area vacated by one group of organisms creates an environmental "vacuum" which rapidly tends to fill with another group of similar metabolic needs; in this case the dinosaur gap was filled by the mammals, which developed in great number and variety, with every sort of adaptation, from ocean and lake life (swimmers) to open range life (runners), to life in dense forests (fliers and climbers). Culminating the mammalian evolution came the ancestral apes and then man.

The Cenozoic Era. The latest era of geologic history is the time of modern-looking creatures. The Age of the Ape was at hand. The Cenozoic has two unequal subdivisions, the Tertiary (which began 67 million years ago) and the Quaternary (the last 2 million years). The origin of these terms is historical; two centuries ago, four divisions of geological time were recognized—the terms "Primary" and "Secondary" were used for Paleozoic and Mesozoic, but they were dropped after the Precambrian was discovered, and only the third and fourth labels survive.

Toward the end of the Cretaceous and in early Tertiary time, about 60 or 70 million years ago, there was a general revival of crustal uplift in many regions from the Alps to the Pacific, and considerable folding in the former marine troughs, so that thick deposits of eroded material were swept down by rivers and spread out over the adjacent plains and ocean floors. The paleogeographic maps of the Tertiary look very much like maps of today. Shallow gulfs gradually filled and dried out, leaving the present coastal plains. Around its entire seaboard the warm Atlantic Ocean continuously overlapped the continental borders, but today these are dry land and are the most densely populated.

Fossils of the Tertiary Period show close connections between the formations of eastern North America, the Mediterranean, and western Europe; these are familiar, modern-looking shells, mollusks, sea urchins, foraminifera, with traces of larger organisms like sharks and whales. The Pacific and Indian Ocean regions became more or less isolated from the Atlantic and developed similar but separate faunas.

The formations of the Tertiary were subdivided more than a century ago by Sir Charles Lyell, the guide and mentor of Darwin. Because of their "modern" types of fossil life he was able to do this on a whole basis of the ratio of living species represented. The international names eventually

adopted were Paleocene, Eocene, Oligocene, Miocene, and Pliocene. The fossils of the Paleocene had the least "modern" appearance; those of the Pliocene the most. All the more exotic forms had died out with the close of the Mesozoic; these included all the dinosaur-type reptiles, all the ammonites, the belemnites, several lines of brachiopods, and many echinoids (sea urchins).

One of the interesting groups of organisms that became very widespread during the Cretaceous but did not die out was the foraminifera, a class of simple, single-celled animals that build a delicate little shell of lime (often shaped like a minute snail); these had helped form the world-wide chalk formations of the Cretaceous. They have continued to flourish up until today. Many of them are planktonic, that is to say they float freely near the surface of the open sea, but certain lines began to build bigger and bigger shells; too heavy to float, they lay on the bottom or adhered to seaweeds. So fast was their evolution and so distinctive the small variations of the shell that they are now used almost all over the world for dating the marine formations. In the Eocene and mid-Tertiary these became larger, up to the size of half dollars, and in Europe they were called "nummulites," the coin shells. Some of the great pyramids of Egypt are built of nummulitic limestones consisting almost entirely of these organisms. By early Miocene some of the tropical forms reached the size of dinner plates, but they eventually became extinct.

The Quaternary Period, the time of the "Great Ice Age" and the last and shortest period in the geological record, began about 2 million years ago. It is subdivided into the Pleistocene and the Holocene or "Recent" epoch, the latter beginning only 10,000 years ago.

Ice ages seem to have recurred about once every 200 million years or so in the geological past. The "Quaternary Ice Age" is the latest, and it is actually still with us—as any Eskimo would agree. About 18 million square miles of the globe are still covered with ice. Through much of geological time, however, there have been no large ice sheets, for it is believed that ice ages are predictable "accidents" owing to a periodic coincidence of land and poles. When the poles coincide with water, there is no chance of building up big glaciers, and warm currents tend to melt the ice floes. During late Tertiary time the relative position of the continents to the earth's poles shifted from sites in eastern Siberia and in the southern Indian Ocean to their present positions. With the South Pole located in the great mountainous Antarctic continent, a series of important events began. First, precipitation in the mountains turned to snow and then ice; snowfields built up into glaciers and, growing larger, the glaciers spread out over the lowlands.

The freezing of Antarctica began about 3 or 4 million years ago and initiated a drop in the world's sea level, because water was not returned to

the oceans by the normal melting in the summertime. The lowering in sea level caused all the land areas to become relatively higher and also wider. In this way the North American continent alone became enlarged by 2,200,000 square miles—an amount equal to approximately two-thirds the present size of the United States. At the same time renewed mountain building took place from Alaska to the Sierra Nevada, in the Andes, in the Alps, the Himalayas, and elsewhere, so that the high elevations became snow-capped and glacier-covered too. The Arctic Ocean became almost isolated by the lowering of sea level, and deprived of warm currents, ice floes formed over it. Mountain glaciers in northern Canada and Scandinavia spread out onto the lowland plains. Warm, moisture-laden air from the Atlantic continued to blow into these cold regions, but instead of rain, it fell as snow. At maximal stages glacier ice reached right across western Europe to Ireland and across North America from Illinois to New England. Cyclically the ice melted and there were warm “interglacial” episodes, though in the great mass of Antarctica the ice persisted.

The position of the planet earth in relation to the sun, which provides our warmth, is always changing a little bit. Neither the orbital ellipse nor the axis tilt is rigidly constant. In the geological past when there were usually no polar mountains, such small changes did not matter, but for a cooled earth, minor oscillations in the amount of solar heat received had profound effects. These astronomic cycles set up climatic changes of 20,000- to 90,000-year intervals, which grew progressively greater and greater, because less and less of the ice from the previous oscillation melted during the following mild swing. Since the complex mathematics of their prediction was worked out first by a Yugoslav scientist, Milankovitch, these climatic oscillations are often known as the Milankovitch cycles. It is against this background of tremendous climatic changes that man has evolved to his present state. It is tempting to suspect a cause-and-effect relationship.

In the early part of the Quaternary the ice in North America was limited to the mountains of Alaska, the Rockies, the Canadian Arctic, and Greenland. But, during the last million years, four oscillations brought continental glacier ice out across the prairies. The last advance reached to the present position of New York City and a line from Long Island out to Nantucket. Each of these “glaciations” has received a name from the particular state where its deposits were first mapped in detail and a similar sequence was mapped in the Alps (names given in parentheses)—in sequence, Nebraskan (Günz), Kansan (Mindel), Illinoian (Riss) and Wisconsin (Würm). In between each ice advance, which lasted in its extreme form only 10,000 to 20,000 years, there were long periods of mild or quite hot conditions, when the ice melted away more or less completely.

The long beginning phase of the Quaternary Ice Age has not been

closely subdivided, but it has been given the general name Villafranchian in Europe or Blancan in North America, which probably covers deposits laid down even in the late Pliocene. During this early phase in many parts of the world gradual climatic changes in mountain areas played a most important role. Previously the mountains had been low in elevation and cloaked by subtropical forests; now with general uplift and a cooling climate, they became drier and the highest areas came above the tree line. With thinning vegetation, the former thick tropical soil became deeply eroded and the resultant debris filled the lower valleys with silt. Heavy siltation occurred along all the great rivers, and it is in these silt and gravel terraces that many of the fossils of that time are found, fossils ranging from ancestral horse to mammoth.

With the advance of ice across the plains two important changes took place. The usual climatic belts—tundra, prairie, conifer forest, broad-leaved forest, subtropical forest—shifted toward the equator. The tundra belt (with muskeg, mosses, and reindeer) was pushed down to the latitudes of Paris and Philadelphia. The tropical belt was extremely constricted, and the subtropics became broad deserts. In Africa, the Sahara extended southward and the Kalahari sands spread northward, to overlap in the now jungle-covered Congo. Hardly a tree in this modern rain forest does not have its roots in desert sands. Sand dunes left over from those stages in Europe and North America are also now mostly covered by trees and scrub, but the old sandy soil is still there.

Through the Quaternary, each time the continental ice fronts withdrew, the floods of meltwater scoured out much deeper valleys than existed before. Much of it went into the Mississippi and St. Lawrence, the Rhine and the Danube. With each successive glacial advance the colder oceans led to reduced evaporation and thus the drier conditions led to siltation of the rivers, which would otherwise have had sufficient energy to carry the sediment down to the ocean. At the beginning of each interglacial period there was a return of warm rainfall and renewed cutting down of the river channels. The result was that modern valleys are paralleled by numerous terraces of old flood plain deposits, now abandoned. Many of them have been washed away altogether. By the time each full interglacial was reached, vegetation had covered the landscape, and as a protective blanket it would cut down soil erosion so that sluggish "equilibrium" conditions returned. It is significant that man's twentieth-century role has been to cut down the trees and destroy the vegetation, setting up soil erosion that is quite comparable with ice age conditions. Man-made deserts of today thus re-create nature's desert of 20,000 years ago. Unfortunately, the process is not always reversible because the reserves of soil grow less and less.

In the interior basins in the Rocky Mountains, East Africa, central

Australia, and central Asia, after each glacial phase, the melting ice and the return of bountiful rains led to the build-up of immense numbers of freshwater lakes. These "pluvial lakes" (partly owing to the lower oceanic evaporation of glacial times) were not able to persist through each glacial stage. With each succeeding interglacial condition they mostly dried up altogether or were reduced to salty brines as in the Great Salt Lake of Utah today. These pluvial lakes caused much confusion in the past, it being thought that they belonged to glacial stages. Actually they were short-lived and corresponded only to the transition stages from glacial to interglacial.

In the areas where the glacier ice had melted away, extensive belts of "till" were left behind. Till consists of the scooped-up soil and boulders that have been pushed and scraped off the land surface as the ice advanced. Much of it became frozen into the ice, and many boulders ("erratics") were carried distances of up to 1,000 miles from their source.

With the low sea level of the glacial stages the shallow Bering Straits offered a dry-land connection between North America and Siberia. North American horses strayed across and spread all over Asia and eventually reached Europe, while African and Eurasian animals like the woolly mammoth and mastodon (a giant elephant) reached North America. Bones, teeth, and tusks of these enormous animals are found right across the country in sediments dated up until only 5,000 years ago. They required large amounts of vegetation as foodstuffs, so they preferred to live near the coasts or swamplands. Since the last glacial stage the sea level has risen more than 300 feet, and coastal fishermen from Maine to Virginia are frequently hauling in these bones with their trawling nets.

The last general melting began about 17,000 years ago, slowly at first and hesitantly, with numbers of brief glacier readvances. Around the borders of the melting ice extensive lakes were formed, and every now and then these spilled over. In Europe the resultant rivers flowed out toward the North Sea and helped carve out the English Channel. In North America they flowed into the Mississippi, the Hudson, and the St. Lawrence with torrents of flood water that at times clouded half the North Atlantic with mud. At the same time the sea level rose faster than 10 feet in a century, so that by 6,000 years ago it stood near its present level. It seems to be no chance coincidence that in the folklore of most riparian peoples there are tales of the Great Flood. The Noachian deluge may also in part have been engendered by the marked increase in precipitation that occurred in early postglacial time in Anatolia and East Africa. Since 6,000 years ago that precipitation has been steadily decreasing.

By about 10,000 years ago approximately half the continental ice was gone and profound warming changes affected the world. Not least among the phenomena was the accelerated evolution of man, from his Stone Age

existence to the stage when he first started building great temples along the Nile 5,000 or so years ago

Postglacial time. This last 10,000 years is known as the Holocene Epoch, or informally as the "Recent" or "Postglacial" stage. Although marked by a general warm-up, there have been further brief climatic oscillations which produced "little ice ages" from time to time and changed the landscape somewhat. Apart from the polar regions, all the land ice was gone 6,000 years ago. That represented the warmest stage on earth for nearly 100,000 years. It is often called the "climatic optimum." Since that time the average annual mean temperature in the mid-latitudes has dropped about 5 degrees Fahrenheit, and we are now partway toward the next glacial phase (although it is not expected for several thousand years). From 1890 to 1940 there was an important warming phase again, but since 1940 it has had only minor fluctuations. Air pollution has had important effects on city climates, but the immediate trend of world climate is not known.

Several times since the climatic optimum, about 3,000 years ago, in early Roman times, and again in the Middle Ages (about A.D. 1350 to 1750), there have been "little ice ages" lasting a few decades, followed by another trend. In the arid Southwest of the United States early man had become an agriculturalist during the first millennium A.D., but after the 1200's the coming of cooler conditions in the north meant drier conditions in the south, and he was forced to abandon many of his riverside villages as the waters dried up; thus it was that when the Spanish arrived they found many of the Indians as nomadic hunters. Curiously enough, it was then that the horse, so useful to the Plains Indians, was reintroduced by the Spanish. The horse, which had evolved on these self-same plains, had become extinct during the last glacial stage (many were killed and eaten by the paleo-Indian), but was now brought back to his own.

Geological events consequent upon these planetary changes in climate are widely observed also in the Old World. The melting of ice from Scandinavia caused an unloading of the earth's crust, so that it has been steadily rising in the north, drying out harbors and creating new coastal lands. Parallel sinkings have occurred in the southern Baltic and North Sea (noticeable particularly in the Netherlands).

The warming trend that accompanied the fall of the Roman Empire in the Mediterranean lands was marked by desiccation, drought, and deforestation. Soil erosion resulted, and many of the Roman and Greek ruins are now buried under many feet of silt. The process was not local, for the same burial in silt can be seen as far away as Mohenjo-Daro in Pakistan or Angkor Wat in Cambodia. The same desiccating trends are reflected by the encroachment of deserts and the drying out of wells in the seventh to tenth

centuries along the Great Silk Road across central Asia. The first Suez canal (a sweet-water canal built by Ramses II from Cairo to Suez) suffered the same fate. Small climatic oscillations are always modulating the major geological curves, and many events in human history seem to correlate very remarkably with environmental controls. In spite of suggestive writings by some explorers and historians such as Ellsworth Huntington and Arnold Toynbee, the field has never been researched by someone with scientific training and modern equipment.

The historical theory that ascribes many events in the human record to environmental causes thus receives powerful support from geology, but natural science teaches that single causes in open planetary systems are scarcely possible. The one theory does not explain everything. It never does. The 4.5-billion-year history of this planet points irresistibly to the conclusion that a living organism is created out of his environment, but it also shows that an organism modifies the total environment of his successors. This applies as equally to bacteria as to man.

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3 The Evolution of Life

Despite our knowledge of astronomy and geology, most men accept the earth as something enduring—timeless and endless. Today is yesterday, tomorrow will be another today. To be sure, many societies have their creation myths, but the events alluded to took place in the dim past. Yet there has always been evidence, literally at man's feet, suggesting that the earth of yesterday was indeed different from the earth of today.

Before man was able to develop a scientific view of the biological world and his place in it, he was forced to observe and speculate for millennia about the nature and variety of living things, and about their origins and possible extinction. He observed peculiar formations in rocks—the fossils—and wondered about their cause and character. He observed erupting volcanoes, the eroding action of moving waters, the layering of rocks—and speculated about the antiquity of the earth and the changes it might have experienced with the passage of time. Leonardo da Vinci observed fossils of marine animals in the mountains of Italy and reasoned that at one time the region must have been covered by the ocean.

Before the nineteenth century, isolated observations and speculations of this sort were of little importance in intellectual history, since they were never related to a conceptual scheme of origin and change. There was, of course, an excellent reason why they should not be. The creation myth of Western man, as portrayed in Genesis, was for centuries the accepted view—accepted because it was divine scripture. The Genesis account of creation spread throughout the world, displacing earlier classical myths and, backed by the authority and presence of Western man, encountered only insignificant philosophical opposition. Yet gradually this view has been displaced in turn.

In the early years of the nineteenth century, an ever increasing volume of observation and speculation slowly led to the modern sciences of geology and biology. There is no aspect of geology or biology antedating 1800 that has not been replaced by better work done thereafter; the efforts of the earlier naturalists are now of interest almost exclusively to the historian of science. But, unlike us, the nineteenth-century investigators were not independent of the early naturalists. These founders of modern geology and biology were both led and misled by the observations and speculations of those who had gone before them.

The key ingredient in the change from nonscience to science was a

Biochronology of the Planet Earth

ERA	PERIOD	EPOCH	TIME OF BEGINNING (millions of years ago)	BIOLOGICAL EVENTS
ARCHEOZOIC PROTEROZOIC	Precambrian (periods)		4,600	Origin of the earth and solar system
			(?)4,000	Origin of life, leading to production of oxygen
			(?)1,500	First primitive soft-bodied animals; only a few fossils known; much evolution occurred, and main types of invertebrates and some aquatic plants existed
PALEOZOIC	Cambrian		600	Many aquatic plants, some plants invade land; trilobites, brachopods, and many other invertebrates, shelly fossils begin to appear commonly
	Ordovician		500	Earliest known chordates, graptolites and corals widespread
	Silurian		435	Club mosses and other primitive land plants abundant, some arthropods may have invaded land
	Devonian		395	Fishes abundant, first amphibians; many land arthropods, horse-tails, ferns, liverworts appear
	Carboniferous			Huge forests of primitive plants
		Mississippian	345	The Age of Amphibians
		Pennsylvanian	310	Reptiles appear
MESOZOIC	Permian		280	Extinction of many Paleozoic organisms such as trilobites; amphibians decrease in importance
	Triassic		230	Forests of conifers and cycads, first mammals, reptiles abundant and varied
	Jurassic		180	The Age of Ammonites; first birds
	Cretaceous			Extinction of dinosaurs and many other mesozoic organisms;
			135	flowering plants appear
CENOZOIC	Tertiary	Paleocene	67	Mammals abundant, first primates; flowering plants abundant
		Eocene	58	
		Oligocene	36	
		Miocene	25	
		Pliocene	7	
	Quaternary	Pleistocene	20	
		Holocene	0.01	

change in attitude. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries theory became less and less constrained by scripture and ancient authority and came to depend more and more on observation and experimentation.

If one were to have asked the question, "What has been the history of life?" at the middle of the eighteenth century, the answer might well have been, "Is there any reason to think that there has been a history of life other than the cycle of birth, maturation, and death? Have not things remained essentially the same since the time of creation, which Bishop Ussher tells us occurred in 4004 B.C.?" But in the nineteenth century, nature, and nature alone, became the guide to nature's secrets.

In retrospect, it is clear that there were two fundamentals to be established before men could recognize and study the problem of a history of life. One was a method, the other a discovery.

The method was that of the paleontologist. It slowly became apparent that the fossils which appeared so abundantly in some stratified rocks were the petrified remains of animals and plants that had lived in the past. The past, therefore, was not irretrievably lost. A paleontologist could study the fossils carefully and learn something of the structure and even the way of life of the extinct creatures—whether the organisms had lived in the ocean, in fresh water, or on land.

The discovery was that of the tremendous antiquity of the earth. As the geologists probed the earth's crust, they found that many of the rocks were layered or stratified. Careful study suggested that many of these beds of stratified rocks had been formed under water. One could imagine a river carrying debris to the ocean or an inland sea and depositing it in a delta. The earlier deposits would be successively covered by the later deposits. Slowly these sediments would change to stone with the oldest layer on the bottom and the youngest on top. The tremendous thickness of these layers suggested that they must have required a very long time for their formation. How long? Hundreds of thousands or even millions of years; therefore, the earth could not have been created in 4004 B.C. as Bishop Ussher had claimed.

Thus nature had been keeping a crude diary in the stratified rocks. Each layer of rock represented a capsule of time, and any fossils it contained represented the animals or plants of that time. By studying the fossils at successively higher levels one could learn if and how life had changed during that portion of the earth's history represented by these particular rocks.

The quarries of the Paris Basin provided some of the earliest evidence. Here there were layers of marl, sandstone, limestone, clay, sand, and gypsum. It became evident that the area, now dry land, had been at various times a lake or an arm of the sea. When French scientist Georges Cuvier

(1769–1832) studied the fossils in these formations he discovered something of great importance the fossils of successively lower layers were more and more unfamiliar. Most of them in the lowest layers seemed to be entirely unknown: there were no living representatives on the coast of France or, for that matter, anywhere in the world.

The suggestion that some fossils represented species no longer living raised profound questions for the theologian, philosopher, and biologist. What of the commonly held belief that the earth had a fixed number of species which had existed from the moment of creation? Had there been a cycle of creation and extinction? Had there been organic change, or an evolution of life, as some of the Greek philosophers had suggested?

The work of Jean Baptiste Pierre Antoine de Monet, Chevalier de Lamarck (1744–1829), was one of the first attempts to provide a comprehensive answer. Lamarck rejected the belief that species were fixed either in number or in structure. The nature of a species at any one time—its structure, physiology, and way of life—depended on the demands of the environment, he reasoned. In the process of adapting to the environment, organisms changed. Those structures and processes that led to better adaptation would be used and, hence, further developed; those that did not would be employed less and degenerate. The use or disuse of structures would result in one kind of organism slowly changing into another. Lamarck subscribed to the prevailing view that such structures modified by use or disuse in one generation would be transmitted to the next generation by the hereditary process. Thus, the ancestors of today's life had been different animals and plants in the past.

Many of Lamarck's theories were validated by later workers, but history has not dealt kindly with him. He was right in his central thesis, the evolution of species, but today he is remembered mainly for proposing a mechanism of evolution that has not withstood the test of scientific analysis. There is no convincing evidence that the changes he assumed to come from the striving of the individual can be transmitted to its offspring.

The public and scientific acclaim for the "founder of modern evolutionary theory" goes to Lamarck's successor, Charles Robert Darwin (1809–1882). This is not entirely fair, since the judgment is based less on differences in the central ideas of the two men than on the way they stated their case. Lamarck presented skillful arguments to prove that evolution occurred, but failed to support his views adequately with data. He was more a philosopher than a scientist, but he lived in an age when scientists were highly suspicious of philosophical speculation because it had proved a poor means of understanding nature. Darwin's theory of evolution was also speculative, but he buttressed his hypotheses with what his contemporaries regarded as "overwhelming evidence."

Charles Darwin is probably the world's most widely known scientist. He was the effective promulgator not only of *the* most important idea in biological science but one that was to be felt personally by every educated individual associated with Western culture. Long before, Copernicus had demoted man's earthly abode from its place in the center of the universe to a remote corner of the cosmos. This was unsettling to men's sense of their own importance, but somewhat abstract: to the untutored eye the sun *seemed* to circle the earth in punctual obedience. Darwin's ideas, however, had an exceedingly personal impact: once men became aware of them, they found it increasingly hard to believe that their progenitors had emerged fully formed from the hand of the Creator. Darwin offered an Eden far less gratifying to the human ego: the gradual evolution of man from the apes, beasts that seemed totally devoid of virtue. Other animals might be loyal, strong, brave, useful, or beautiful, but the familiar apes and monkeys in the zoo were nervous, chattering sex deviates. If the biological facts had allowed Darwin to suggest that man had evolved from the noble race horse, the kingly lion, or even the faithful dog, it is probable that his theory would have encountered far less opposition—at least from the animal-loving British!

Since Darwin was the father of an important scientific theory with such personal implications, a theory which could be understood by nearly everyone, it is not surprising that his life and work should have been widely discussed, praised, abused, and analyzed. He was born on February 12, 1809, in Shrewsbury, England, on the same day that Abraham Lincoln was born in the backwoods of Kentucky. His father was a well-to-do physician, Dr. Robert Darwin, and his mother was Susannah Wedgwood, from the family of famous potters. The young Darwin was much interested in natural history. Lesser men delight in pointing out that he was an indifferent student, at both Edinburgh and Cambridge, where he attempted to prepare first for a career in medicine and then in the church. At the time the universities paid slight attention to biology or geology, in part because these sciences had so little to offer. Darwin was largely self-taught in science, and the most important part of this informal education took place between 1831 and 1836 when he sailed around the world on H.M.S. *Beagle*. The *Beagle* was dispatched by the British government on a mission of exploration and scientific discovery. Darwin spent much time ashore, especially in South America and Australia, where he collected and studied animals, plants, and fossils.

It was a decisive voyage. When Darwin set sail on the *Beagle*, he believed in the special creation of the species of animals and plants. It was the numerous observations that he made during the trip which stimulated him to seek alternative explanations for the origin of the variability of the living world.

After his return, Darwin married a Wedgwood cousin, and the two of them with their ten children were to spend most of their lives at Down, in the county of Kent. Ill health, possibly caused by a tropical disease contracted on his great voyage, forced Darwin to lead the life of a recluse. He rarely traveled and he received few visitors. His energies had to be carefully budgeted. But this semi-invalid managed to publish twenty major scientific books and numerous shorter articles. Most of these were outstanding contributions to science.

A naturalist in England soon comes to know many local kinds of animals and plants. There might seem to be an abundance of species there, but the magnitude of this variability pales into insignificance once that naturalist visits the wet tropics. Darwin was greatly impressed with the luxuriance of life and the great number of species of animals and plants he encountered in Amazonia. Of greater importance for the later development of his ideas, he observed that populations of what seemed to be the same species were subject to geographical variation. The individuals of one locality might be essentially identical, but they differed noticeably from the individuals of other localities. Were the distinctive populations of each locality created separately? Darwin also noted examples of fossil species that were obviously different from what seemed to be their living representatives. Were there cycles of creation and extinction? Observations of this sort suggested to Darwin that this variability of living varieties and species might be accounted for by evolution. Geographic variation might be explained by the evolutionary divergence of what had been originally a single homogeneous population. Similarly, might not the fossils be reminders of a population of animals that slowly evolved into the living types?

Hypotheses in science are of use only to the extent that they can be tested, but any direct test of the hypothesis of evolution seemed out of the question: evolution was assumed to occur slowly, so slowly that it could not be detected during the lifetime of the investigator. The species that were familiar to man were "fixed" in the sense that he had never observed them to change: embalmed animals from the tombs of ancient Egypt, for example, seemed to differ in no way from members of the same species that were still living.

There was nothing novel about a hypothesis of evolution. Lamarck had anticipated Darwin with such a notion, and Darwin's grandfather had anticipated Lamarck. Darwin's principal contribution to evolutionary theory was to explain its mechanism—how it might occur. The germ of his idea came from reading Thomas Malthus, who had suggested for man what Darwin had observed for wild species in many parts of the world: that rates of reproduction are so great that if all the offspring survived, any species could soon form a solid crust of life on the earth's surface. An

oyster produces millions of young each year, an oak thousands of acorns. Yet the sea does not become a solid mass of oysters or the land an unbroken stand of oak trees. These events do not come to pass because the enormous rate of reproduction is balanced by an enormous rate of mortality, especially of the young.

Another ingredient in Darwin's emerging hypothesis was variability. He had observed this both in the geographic differences already referred to and in the lesser but distinct variations of individual members of a species in a single locality. One specimen might be slightly larger than another; one might have a heavy coat of hair, another a sparse coat; one might be more fleet of foot than another. Darwin assumed that much of this variability was inherited; that is, transmitted from generation to generation.

Darwin's explanatory hypothesis for the mechanism of evolution combined the notion of the huge rate of reproduction (and its corollary of a huge death rate) with the notion of variability. Might not there be a difference between the individuals that survived to maturity and those that died young—before the age of reproduction? In a cold climate, might not an animal with a warm coat of fur have a slightly better chance of surviving and leaving offspring than one with a sparse coat? If this was true, one could explain how evolution worked. In the population of animals in the cold locality there would be variability in the insulating effectiveness of the coats. Those with the thicker coats would have a better chance of surviving, especially in those years that were colder than average. Since the type of fur was assumed to be inherited, the offspring of the warmly clad animals would also be warmly clad. With the passage of generations, there would be a slow change in the population, brought about by differential mortality and the survival of the fittest.

Darwin called this process *natural selection*, the selection by nature of the individuals best able to survive and leave offspring. He suggested that nature had done for eons what man had done for generations. Man's artificial selection consisted of choosing for the parents of the next generation those domesticated animals and plants which had the characteristics best suited to his needs. From the variability present in wild horses, man had selected many breeds. Generation after generation, the fleetest mares and stallions became the parents in the lineage that was to produce the Arabian race horse. Other horses were selected for their strength. These became the war-horses of western Europe, capable of carrying a medieval knight, his lance and sword, and his cocoon of steel.

Darwin's hypothesis of the evolution of species need not have contradicted the idea of special creation. One could imagine the special creation of a million species, or whatever number there is on the earth, and the evolution of these with the passage of time—each species becoming better

adapted to its environment. But Darwin suggested something very different, namely, a dawn of life with only a few very primitive creatures. As the ages passed, these progenitors of life had evolved into the diversity of later life, as illustrated by fossils as well as the species alive today.

In one of the greatest of all syntheses in science, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection or the Preservation of the Favoured Races in the Struggle for Life* (1859), Darwin attempted to relate knowledge of the living world to his hypothesis of evolution. He and those who followed him found that what organisms were and did made sense in terms of evolution: the seemingly endless variety of species, the fact that they could be classified into natural groups, the peculiarities of embryonic development, the presence of useless vestigial organs, the fact of geographic distribution. These and many other observations fell neatly into place. Evolution ceased to be merely a hypothesis: it became a theory uniting a great variety of data into a meaningful whole.

Today biologists accept a modernized version of Darwin's hypothesis for the mechanism of evolution, namely the natural selection of randomly occurring variation. This was not always so. In Darwin's own lifetime he, and nearly all other biologists, fully believed that evolution had occurred. There was, however, increasing uncertainty about his explanation of how it occurs. Natural selection seemed probable enough, but Darwin and others of his time failed to understand both the origin of variability and how it might be transferred from generation to generation. Darwin's original belief in the random nature and spontaneous occurrence of hereditary differences was slowly abandoned for lack of evidence. Instead, he and others turned more and more to Lamarck's suggestion that the environment is directly responsible for the origin and type of hereditary differences. It was only in the years after 1900 that geneticists supplied the data showing that the Darwin of 1859 had been closer to the truth.

The history of life on the earth is read from the rocks that contain the evidence. Not surprisingly, the historian of life experiences one of the difficulties that besets the historian of civilized man—the earliest records are incomplete. The sedimentary rocks of the earth's crust contain a fair record of life during the past 600 million years, the span from the beginning of the Cambrian Period to the present. The sedimentary rocks older than the Cambrian have been much altered since they were formed and, on the whole, contain few fossils. Yet it is clear that life had a long history in Precambrian times. Complex animals were already in existence in that period: the Cambrian seas contained protozoans, sponges, corals, many types of shelled animals, echinoderms, arthropods, and various types of algae, fungi, and bacteria. Since these organisms undoubtedly evolved from

simpler organisms, they must have done so in Precambrian times. Indeed, the only major group of animals that has not been discovered in the Cambrian is our own, the Chordata, which includes all the vertebrates and a few more primitive marine animals.

Thus the origin of life and its early evolution must have occurred during an immense span of time for which we have a meager record. The best that can be done is to speculate on what might have happened and, in the case of the origin of life, to see if the "what might have happened" can be duplicated in the laboratory.

Most scientists believe, though they have no proof, that life is a local product—that it did not originate elsewhere and then travel to the earth. They assume that before the appearance of life itself there must have been a period when organic molecules formed. The waters of the earth are thought to have gradually accumulated a variety of proteins, nucleic acids, and other molecules that today are produced only by other living creatures. Some of the chemical events that are assumed to have occurred can be duplicated in the laboratory by re-creating conditions that are believed to have existed on the earth when life first appeared.

Life must have first occurred when a complex molecule, or group of molecules, reached the stage where reproduction could take place: that is, raw material could be used to make more of itself. "Must have first occurred" because the ability to reproduce is the key element in any definition that distinguishes living from nonliving. The first living thing, or molecule, may have been similar to the nucleic acids, which throughout the history of life have been the basis of inheritance between generations and of the development of individuals within generations. Next there was probably a slow accretion of other molecules around the self-reproducing molecule, which thereby increased its efficiency of survival and reproduction. Thus Darwinian evolution very probably began at the molecular level.

The origin of life probably occurred about 4 billion years ago. The oldest known fossil organisms, which are believed to be about 3 billion years old, are representatives of two of the most primitive kinds of life still extant: the bacteria and blue-green algae. Before the Cambrian Period began, some 2.5 billion years later, many different kinds of aquatic bacteria, algae, and fungi had evolved. It was also in this dimly lighted period that the major group of animals appeared.

The seas of the Cambrian period teemed with a rich variety of life. There were many kinds of sponges, and in some parts of the Cambrian seas, these were so abundant that their skeletons formed huge reefs. There are impressions in Cambrian rocks of jellyfish, much like those still living. Mollusks and annelid worms flourished. Echinoderms were also common, but the Cambrian species were very different from those now living. Two of the most distinctive types of invertebrates that occurred in the Cambrian

were the brachiopods and trilobites. The first are superficially like clams, but they are classified in their own major group, or phylum, only a few brachiopods are still living. The trilobites were primitive arthropods, the phylum that includes the insects, lobsters, centipedes, and spiders. They were complex animals with numerous legs and a broad shield-shaped head. Some were a foot and a half in length; all are extinct.

The fact that trilobites and other complex animals already existed in the Cambrian suggests that the evolutionary radiation of the main types of animals must have occurred during those immense Precambrian ages that have left such an incomplete fossil record. The evolutionary record from the Cambrian to the present is largely the story of an evolutionary waxing and waning within the different phyla. Groups appear, and evolve numerous species. Then some decline to extinction, while others continue to evolve and flourish.

One of the most momentous events that occurred in the Cambrian was the invasion of dry land by green plants. In the early Cambrian the most advanced plants were the algae, the group that includes the seaweeds of today. Late in the Cambrian some of the algae evolved into plants that could live on land. Little is known of these early plants—the fossil evidence is too incomplete. It was not until the Silurian, which began about 435 million years ago, that fossils of land plants became abundant. These are club mosses, representatives of which still exist. The diversity of land plants became greater in the following period, the Devonian, which began about 395 million years ago. Horsetails, ferns, and liverworts appeared. Representatives of all of these types are still living, but most of them are small. During the Devonian, however, these plants grew to great size, producing true forests, but this was nothing as compared to the luxuriance of plant life in the next major period, the Carboniferous, beginning 345 million years ago and ending 280 million years ago. The dead plants of the Carboniferous forests are of tremendous economic importance today, for they have become the deposits of coal that exist in such profusion in many regions of the earth.

These primitive land plants had passed their peak by the end of the Paleozoic era. Most have few living representatives, and their former position of prominence has been assumed by more advanced types. The conifers (spruce, pine, fir, and their relatives) are known from the Paleozoic, but they did not become prominent until the Mesozoic era, which began about 230 million years ago. Most of the familiar plants today are the flowering plants, which first appear in the fossil record near the end of the Mesozoic era, but during the Cenozoic era, which began about 67 million years ago, they began an evolutionary burst which was to result in their blanketing the earth with a coat of green.

Since, directly or indirectly, all animals depend on green plants for

food, green plants had to invade dry land in advance of the animals. Once plants were established, many new evolutionary possibilities opened up. The first animals to take advantage of the new opportunities seem to have been the arthropods. It is possible that some scorpion-like land species existed in the Silurian. Thereafter a rapid evolutionary radiation of land-living arthropods occurred, and soon all the major types were present. These first animals to conquer dry land have never lost their numerical superiority, there are more species of arthropods today than there are species of all the other types.

The one phylum for which there is a reasonably complete fossil record is our own, the *Chordata*. The earliest known examples are the ostracoderms, which first occur in the Ordovician period. They belong to a group of fishes that is represented today by the lamprey and hagfish. The ostracoderms had no jaws, and in most aspects of their anatomy they were very primitive. Some of them soon evolved into other kinds of fishes, which flourished in the Devonian seas. These had jaws, and some had paired pectoral and pelvic fins. The paired fins were of special importance, since evolution was to mold them into the arms and legs of terrestrial vertebrates.

These fish evolved into the amphibians during the Devonian period. The first amphibians were quite unlike their present-day representatives, the frogs, toads, and salamanders. Many were huge and, in size and superficial form, resembled a thick-bodied alligator. Amphibians have never become completely at home on dry land. Even today the embryonic stages of nearly all must be passed in water or in a very moist situation. During the Carboniferous era one group of amphibians surmounted this limitation, evolving into reptiles. In comparison to the fishes, both the amphibians and the reptiles underwent many internal structural and physiological changes in their evolution from aquatic to terrestrial animals. Lungs replaced gills, legs replaced fins, and the circulatory, excretory, and reproductive systems showed many changes. The aquatic eggs of fish and amphibians evolved into a larger egg, containing much yolk, and surrounded by protective membranes and a shell that allowed the embryo to develop on dry land.

During the Mesozoic era the reptiles underwent a great burst of evolutionary diversification. Some took to the air, others to the seas; some became the huge dinosaurs. Two groups did something even more spectacular—they evolved into birds and mammals. Both of these events seem to have taken place at about the same time (late Triassic for mammals; Jurassic for birds), and they may be regarded as the latest major evolutionary experiments of the animal kingdom.

We are likely to look upon the mammalian way of life as obviously superior to the reptilian way. Yet natural selection did not render this verdict freely. The mammals remained inconspicuous during most of the

Mesozoic, when the reptiles were evolving such a spectacular array of species. At the end of the Mesozoic most of the reptiles became extinct, for reasons that are still wholly conjectural. It was only after this, during the Cenozoic, that the mammals began their main evolutionary developments.

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4 Human Evolution

The Cenozoic Era is appropriately known as the Age of Mammals. Beginning in the Paleocene, the little shrewlike mammals of the Mesozoic evolved into a vast number of different species. Including some that returned to the oceans, they occupied almost every conceivable environment. The adaptive radiations of the mammals were such that they became (with the exception of the insects) the most abundant and varied of all land animals. The Tertiary mammalian species are no longer with us, though some, such as the opossum, have changed little since then. All of the others have been replaced by newly evolved forms adapted to constantly changing environments and conditions of competition.

Man is one of the more recently evolved mammals. In zoological classification he is a primate—a relative of the apes, monkeys, lemurs, and tarsiers. The lemurs and tarsiers were the first primates; they evolved from simple insect-eaters of the Mesozoic. Their fossils, dating to the Paleocene and Eocene periods, are known throughout the northern temperate regions of the world. Early in the Cenozoic, probably during Eocene times, lemurs and tarsiers migrated southward to the tropics. In this new environment they soon evolved into three different strains: the New World monkeys, the Old World monkeys, and the great apes.

Within the order of the primates, man belongs to the same group as the great apes—the gorilla, chimpanzee, orang-utan, and gibbon. These apes closely resemble man in their skeletal structure, their teeth, and even their

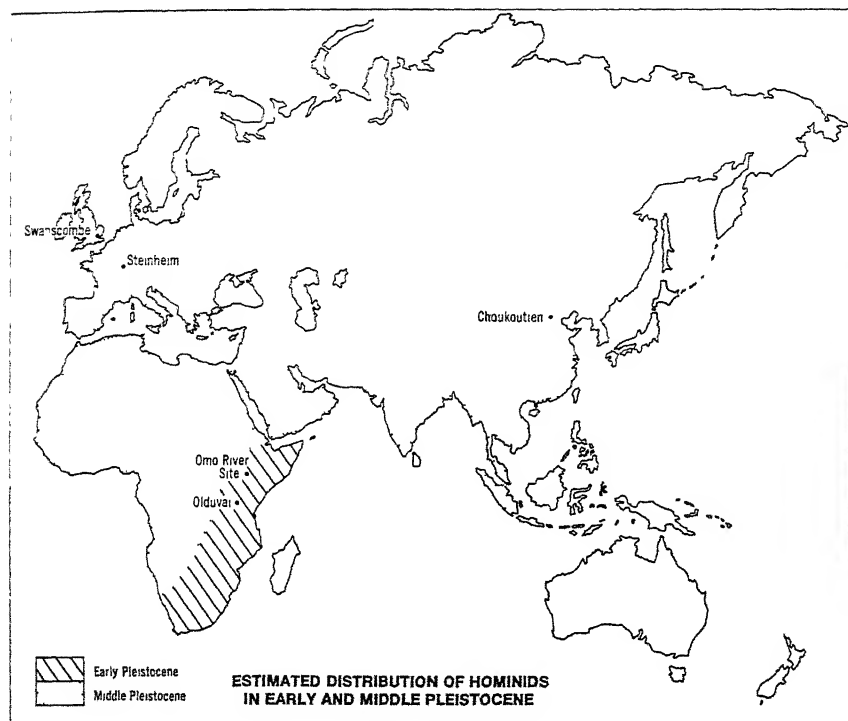
B.C.	4,000,000	Earliest known hominids
	1,750,000	Definite stone tools
	600,000	<i>Pithecanthropus</i> evolves
	200,000	Possible <i>Homo sapiens</i> ; use of fire
	95,000	<i>Homo sapiens</i> definitely evolved; burial of dead
	40,000	Modern man appears
	30,000	Earliest art
	9000	Beginnings of animal husbandry, probably also of agriculture

blood types. Their most important differences are their relatively small and simple brains, their inability to master complex languages, the lack of flexibility in their thumbs, the fact that they do not habitually walk upright, the ruggedness of their skulls and skeletons, their fangs and protruding muzzles, and the fact that they do not habitually make and use tools.

Man, however, is not descended from the apes as we know them today. Rather, both man and apes evolved from a varied group of large primates which lived in Europe, Africa, and southern Asia during the Oligocene, Miocene, and Pliocene periods. These creatures, the Dryopithecines, did not walk upright, make tools, or, as far as we know, talk. They were more apelike than manlike, but they had not yet developed all of the extreme characteristics of the modern apes. Some of the Dryopithecines lived in the trees, others probably on the ground. Most of their fossil remains are mere fragments, mainly teeth, which range from very apelike types to some that are rather similar to man's. The few whole or fragmentary skulls which have been recovered indicate that the very rugged bony superstructure of the modern apes had not yet been developed.

Almost all of the fossils that can be identified as human belong to the Quaternary period which, on present evidence, has lasted for about 2 million years. At least the latter half of this period has been abnormal in comparison with the Tertiary. It has been marked by repeated fluctuations in thermal levels, atmospheric circulation, and rainfall; advance and retreat of great continental glaciers; rise and fall of sea level; intensive mountain building; and rapid changes in faunas through extinction and the evolution of new species.

The Quaternary is divided into two epochs, and the earlier of these can be further subdivided in various ways. The major divisions that we will be



dealing with are the Villafranchian or Early Pleistocene (about 2,000,000 to 600,000 years ago), the Middle and Late Pleistocene (about 600,000 to 10,000 years ago), and the Holocene (the last 10,000 years).

The Quaternary begins with the appearance of fossils of the genera *Equus*, *Bos*, and *Elephas* (true horses, cattle, and elephants). Throughout the Villafranchian these and other new species coexisted with a number of older animals that had survived from the Pliocene and, in Africa, with primitive forms of man. There were climatic fluctuations and several periods of continental glaciation during Villafranchian times, but since little is known about them, the Villafranchian is usually treated as a single long epoch, without subdivisions.

During the Middle and Late Pleistocene there were four major periods of glaciation, separated by three long periods when the ice sheets retreated and possibly disappeared altogether. We are now in the early stages of a fourth interglacial period, which is distinguished geologically as the Holocene Epoch. The continental glaciers are still with us, though, for they continue to cover both Greenland and Antarctica.

Perhaps the biggest problem with Quaternary chronology is the difficulty of correlating events in the tropical and subtropical belts with the succession of glacial and interglacial periods. We know that the major glaciations in various parts of the world were contemporary with each other. There is also good evidence of cyclical pluvial and interpluvial periods in the lower latitudes. Only for the latest part of the Quaternary, however, can the glacials and pluvials be correlated with any confidence. Unless one wishes to accept hypothetical correlations that are not based on adequate proof, one is obliged to make such vague chronological statements as "Villafranchian" or "Late Pleistocene," without specifying more exactly the date of an event relative to the glacial sequence. Here, too, science still has much to learn.

For the sake of convenience, we may divide the Quaternary as follows:

<i>Epoch</i>	<i>Years Ago</i>
Holocene	10,000—0
Late Pleistocene (Third Interglacial and Wurm Glaciation)	95,000—10,000
Late Middle Pleistocene (Second Interglacial and Riss Glaciation)	275,000—95,000
Early Middle Pleistocene (Günz and Mindel Glaciations, First Interglacial)	600,000—275,000
Villafranchian or Early Pleistocene	2,000,000—600,000

None of these dates except for those of the Holocene can be considered very exact. The further back in time one goes, the greater is the possibility of error. Some of the dates listed above may be in error by 200,000 or 300,000 years or more. Nevertheless, they seem to be the best possible estimates on the basis of the incomplete evidence with which we have to work.

When we talk about human evolution, we are dealing with two different kinds of processes: the evolution of the human body and the evolution of human behavior. The first of these, called *morphological evolution*, is a biological process which has been studied by physical anthropologists, geneticists, and human paleontologists. The second, *cultural evolution*, is a biosocial process that falls within the domain of archaeologists and cultural anthropologists. The two cannot, however, be fully separated. Each has exerted influence on the other, and both have obeyed the basic laws of evolution formulated by Darwin and his successors. Yet biological and cultural processes are different from each other, and the operation of natural selection is more easily seen in the biological than in the cultural

sphere. It is nevertheless fruitful to view human behavior as adaptive, influenced by biological and environmental facts and shaping biological evolution. Behavior is not pure "culture."

As we peer back into the Pleistocene, it becomes progressively more difficult to be certain which fossils are those of men and which are those of apes. Eventually both blend in with the common *Dryopithecine* ancestors in such a way as to make impossible a decision on purely morphological grounds. Many fossils now recognized as clearly human were once the subject of intense debate. In order to avoid this problem, most anthropologists now use a behavioral, rather than a morphological, definition of man: *Man is the primate that habitually makes and uses tools*. With this definition, the classification of a fossil population as men or apes depends on the evidence (or lack of it) of associated tools, rather than on an assessment of the degree of physical similarity with one group or the other.

The earliest hominids are known collectively as *Australopithecines*, and comprise two major groups: *Australopithecus* and *Paranthropus*. All of the *Australopithecines* show a combination of manlike and apelike features. Their brains were small, near or within the range of brain size of the modern apes. They had well-developed muzzles, only slightly less protruding than those of a chimpanzee. On the other hand, they lacked the ape's fangs, and their dental structure was human (and modern) in almost every significant respect. *Australopithecus* walked erect, and *Paranthropus* probably did too. The principal differences between the two groups were in their size and ruggedness. *Australopithecus* was small, about the size of a modern chimpanzee, with a light body and a delicate skeleton. His skull showed only moderate development of apelike crests and ridges. *Paranthropus* was larger, perhaps the size of a gorilla, heavy-boned, with a very rugged bony superstructure on his skull.

All of the oldest hominid fossils—the only ones that can definitely be dated to the Late Pliocene or the Villafranchian—come from southern and eastern Africa. The oldest of them, from the Omo River in Ethiopia, are nearly 4 million years old and are the only known human fossils of Pliocene times. Still earlier fossils may be found some day, so we cannot say just how old "man" is. On the other hand, the concentration of early hominid finds in south and east Africa, and their absence from Pliocene and Villafranchian deposits elsewhere, makes it likely that it was precisely in that area that man evolved during Late Pliocene times.

No stone tools have yet been found in the early deposits of the Omo River. Nor have the numerous *Australopithecine* fossils from South Africa been found incontrovertibly associated with tools. In the latter case, there is reason to believe that the sites where their remains occur were not the places where they lived, but rather the dens of hyenas that had dragged in

the bones of Australopithecines and other animals. Under such circumstances, one cannot expect to find men and tools in the same place!

Clearer evidence of the human character of at least some of the Australopithecines comes from Olduvai Gorge in Tanganyika. Here the skeletal remains of two different types of hominids have been found together in a level dated by the potassium-argon method at about 1,750,000 years ago, very early in the Villafranchian. The same level contains crude choppers roughly chipped from small cobbles. The classification of these remains has been the subject of considerable debate, some students claiming that they are Australopithecines and others that one of them represents a more advanced form of man. The weight of evidence, however, favors the interpretation that they are somewhat extreme forms of *Paranthropus* and *Australopithecus*. It might be assumed that, because *Australopithecus* is the more "modern" and "evolved" of the two, it was he who fashioned the tools. If so, *Paranthropus* may have furnished part of his diet. There is no direct evidence to substantiate such a conclusion, though, and it is possible that both groups made tools or even that they were made only by *Paranthropus*.

Once tools were regularly made and used, they became a factor in human evolution, setting limits to behavior and opening new possibilities in both the organic and the behavioral spheres. Primates that had not learned to use tools evolved through the normal processes of natural selection, those better adapted to their specific environments producing (on the average) more offspring and thus multiplying their adaptive characteristics in the population. With the advent of toolmaking, adaptation to the *behavioral* environment assumed an increased importance. The well-adapted Australopithecines, both as individuals and as communities, were those whose manual dexterity permitted them to make and use the cobble choppers, and whose upright posture left their hands free to employ them. Tools thus influenced the evolution of the flexible human thumb and gave meaning to the human posture—if, indeed, they were not responsible for the original evolution of that posture.

Australopithecus and *Paranthropus* coexisted throughout Villafranchian times, and *Paranthropus* may have survived into the early Middle Pleistocene. In a general sense, the ancestry of modern man can be found among the Australopithecines. If the two forms were capable of interbreeding, both may lie at the root of man's family tree. If not, *Australopithecus* almost certainly merits that honor.

Early in the Middle Pleistocene, the hominids spread out from tropical Africa, moving northward to North Africa and Europe and eastward across southern Asia as far as China. Most of the Middle Pleistocene fossils represent more evolved forms intermediate between the Australo-

pithecinines and modern man. The earlier fossils in this group belong to an evolutionary stage known as *Pithecanthropus* or *Homo erectus*. Representatives of this stage have been found in Java, China, and northern Africa. These individuals were larger than *Australopithecus*, smaller than *Paranthropus*; their brains were intermediate in size between those of the *Australopithecines* and of modern man; their muzzles and the bony superstructure of their skulls were more reduced than in the older forms, though the brow ridges and occipital crests were still very massive.

The largest group of *Pithecanthropus* fossils so far discovered was excavated in the 1930's at the famous Choukoutien caves in northern China. This site is important not only because of the skeletal material found there, but also because it yielded significant information about the behavior of its inhabitants. They were successful hunters, especially of deer; they used fire, and they engaged in that eminently human activity, cannibalism. *Pithecanthropus* bones were scattered through the deposit with the bones of the animals they hunted, and like the latter, the long bones had been split and the skull bases broken out for the extraction of marrow and brains. There is no indication that they practiced ritual cannibalism, like later and more evolved men, but it does seem that the Chinese *Pithecanthropus* ate their dead rather than bury them.

The stone tools discovered at Choukoutien were crudely made choppers and simple flakes, little different from the Villafranchian tools of Africa. It is likely that they were typical of *Pithecanthropus*' tools throughout most of the early Middle Pleistocene world. In North Africa the lithic assemblage includes some tools typical of the late Middle Pleistocene, but they are not well dated, so it is not clear whether they represent a late survival of *Pithecanthropus* or an early beginning of the new tool forms. In general, the early Middle Pleistocene is a time for which we know a good deal about human skeletal remains, but little about the stone tools that were being made and used.

Exactly the reverse is true for the late Middle Pleistocene. The world's museums are full of artifacts of this period. Numerous archaeological sites are known, and several different cultural traditions have been recognized and studied in detail. Yet with the probable exception of a few *Pithecanthropus* survivals in Java and North Africa, only two human fossils have been discovered which can be securely dated to late Middle Pleistocene times. These are the Steinheim skull from Germany and the Swanscombe skull from England. Little can be concluded from so small a sample, because we do not know how typical these two individuals were. Both had brains within the size range of modern man, and both show a combination of modern and primitive characteristics. The Swanscombe specimen consists of only the back and one side of the brain case; except for the great

thickness of the bone, it is high-vaulted and modern in all significant respects and is often classified as *Homo sapiens*. However, the more complete Steinheim skull shows the same high vaulting and related features of the skull cap, but its massive face and heavily developed brow ridges are beyond the range of modern variation.

If these two skulls tell us little about late Middle Pleistocene man, his artifacts and habitation sites are much more informative. They are distributed throughout Africa, western and southern Europe (extending into Germany), southern Asia (the Arab countries, India, and China), and parts of Indonesia. There is some evidence that man had by then adapted to quite different environments. The African and Asian sites are concentrated in grasslands and river valleys, whereas the European sites are mostly found in zones that were covered by deciduous forest. Most of the late Middle Pleistocene sites consist of specimens redeposited in river gravels, but a few intact habitation sites have been found in Africa. The living floors of these sites, which were probably places where men paused during their seasonal food quest, give no evidence of the construction of shelters. They are all very small and could not have been occupied by more than a few families. As in the case of Choukoutien, they provide evidence of the hunting of many kinds of animals.

Three different late Middle Pleistocene tool traditions are generally recognized by archaeologists. The *Chopper/Chopping-tool tradition* of eastern Asia continued the Early Pleistocene tradition of crude choppers and simple flake tools. The *Flake tradition*, found in parts of western Europe and northern Africa, was not greatly different, but laid greater emphasis on small cutting and scraping tools rather than on heavy-duty chopping tools. The *Biface tradition* was by far the most important, widespread, and technologically sophisticated of the three. It spread throughout Africa, western and southern Europe, and southern Asia as far as India. The most typical tools, from which the tradition derives its name, were large pointed "hand axes" chipped on both faces. During the early Abbevillean phase of the Biface tradition, the hand axes were crudely made and accompanied only by simple flake tools, not really very different from those of the Flake and Chopper/Chopping-tool traditions. Chipping techniques were equally crude, and assemblages differed only in the shape of their heavy-duty tools and in the degree of their emphasis on flake tools. The later Acheulean phase, however, saw an increasing refinement of the hand axes and the successive addition of new tool forms and techniques. By the time of the Second Interglacial, the hand axes were being delicately shaped with wooden or bone batons. With them are found cleavers (straight-edged cutting tools) and flake tools made by the complex Levallois technique. The production of Acheulean tools involved not only functional considerations, but also an aesthetic element.

The coexistence of the sophisticated Acheulean industry with the simpler traditions raises a number of problems. Choppers and flake tools could have been made by a hand no more dexterous than that of an ape, while Acheulean technology required the fully opposable human thumb. But this need not mean that the different traditions were produced by fundamentally different kinds of men. The Swanscombe skull, with its many modern characteristics, was associated with Acheulean tools, but a slightly earlier phase of the Biface tradition was found with *Pithecanthropus* remains in Algeria. The Steinheim skull—far more modern than *Pithecanthropus*—was found with tools of the Flake tradition. Scant as the evidence is, it suggests that any of the major kinds of man was capable of producing any of the Middle Pleistocene tools.

Some authorities hold that variations in the late Middle Pleistocene tool kits reflect adaptations to different environments and ways of getting food. The Biface sites of Europe are concentrated in areas that were forested, while the Flake tradition sites are found beyond the limits of the Pleistocene forest, often near the sea. Men living in the temperate forests of Europe had resources quite different from those who lived along the shore, or on the African grasslands, or in the river valleys of eastern Asia. The exploitation of different food supplies would require different tools, and this fact is probably sufficient to explain most of the diversity of Middle Pleistocene stone tools.

This brings us to the beginning of the Late Pleistocene, some 95,000 years ago. By that time, as we have seen, the primitive Australopithecines had evolved into men with many of the characteristics of today's *Homo sapiens*. The upright posture, human dentition, and the human thumb had evolved by the beginning of the Villafranchian. Thereafter, evolution largely took the form of increasing brain size and complexity, reduction of the muzzle and the bony superstructure of the skull, and the gradual development of distinctly human behavior patterns. Stone tools are attested for the Villafranchian, controlled fire and cannibalism for the early Middle Pleistocene. The late Middle Pleistocene saw considerable refinement of lithic technology. The less tangible aspects of culture are not preserved among the material remains of the past, but it seems certain that other peculiarly human behavior patterns were also established during this time, if not earlier. One of these is language, without which the expanding cultural inventory could not have been passed on from generation to generation. Another is family organization, with its permanent association of males and females in small food-getting and child-rearing units. This reorganization of society also implies evolution from the narrowly restricted estrus cycle of the ape to the year-round sexual activity of the human female, because the permanent association of the family is based on the regular availability of the wife.

Outside of Africa, these early men occupied only a small part of the Old World, and they had not yet reached the Americas, Oceania, or Australia. Population was thin and irregularly distributed. The early men were hunters, using wooden spears and probably throwing sticks (as represented by the very few nonlithic artifacts found in Middle Pleistocene sites). Since they caught herd animals, they must have employed cooperative hunting techniques. They probably exploited a wide variety of plant foods, and their relative dependence on meat and plants undoubtedly varied according to the locally available resources. No more than a few households lived together, and they moved their camps frequently—probably seasonally—in order to take advantage of different food resources.

As we have seen, the Swanscombe and Steinheim skulls have many modern characteristics, including brains as large as those of many of today's men. They are unique specimens, however, and there is no way of knowing whether they are representative of whole late Middle Pleistocene populations. The Late Pleistocene, on the other hand, is represented by a large sample of human fossils, including many which undeniably belong to the species of modern man, *Homo sapiens*.

Fossil men are always the subjects of debate and divergent classifications. It is nearly impossible to get general agreement on the status of any given specimen or population. As a result, it would be very difficult to say when and where *Homo sapiens* first appeared. The principal difficulty is the "Neanderthal problem."

Neanderthal man proper, sometimes called "classic" Neanderthal, is represented by a group of fossils found in Europe, North Africa, and the Near East, all of them dating to the early part of the Würm glaciation. The Neanderthals were short men with extremely rugged skeletons and with a number of nonmodern specializations of the skull, teeth, and mandible, but with brains larger than the modern average. The name Neanderthal (sometimes "progressive" Neanderthal) is also usually applied to the Steinheim skull, to the European fossil population of the Third Interglacial, and to a number of non-"classic" European and Near Eastern fossils of early Würm times, all of which combine some Neanderthal features with others typical of more modern types. Still more distantly, one sometimes finds the more primitive Late Pleistocene men of Africa and eastern Asia identified as Neanderthals.

If there is no consensus in the definition of Neanderthal man, there is still less agreement as to his place in human evolution. For some anthropologists, Neanderthal man is a separate species, an extinct and sterile side branch of man's family tree. For others, he is a major stage in the evolution of humans from *Australopithecus* and *Pithecanthropus* to *Homo sapiens*.

Still others view him as no more than a racial variant of *Homo sapiens*, extinct as a population but contributing, along with other Late Pleistocene races, to the genetic make-up of today's populations. The last view seems most likely because it agrees best with the archaeological evidence and with modern evolutionary theory. If it is correct, all of the Late Pleistocene fossils were *Homo sapiens* and Steinheim and Swanscombe probably were too.

If the classificatory problems remain knotty, the archaeological facts are relatively clear. Most of the fossil remains of the Third Interglacial and of the first Wurm stage are Neanderthals, Neanderthaloids, or other relatively rugged forms, primitive looking but with large brains and many modern characteristics. Two fragmentary skulls from Fontéchevade in France, associated with Flake tradition tools and dated to the Third Interglacial, seem modern in almost every significant respect.

Most of the Third Interglacial tool traditions represent continuations and modifications of the Biface and Flake traditions. In Europe and the Near East, however, a new lithic technology evolved, and many significant new kinds of behavior are evident in the archaeological record. Neanderthal man made tools characterized by Levallois and other special chipping techniques and by a number of small forms including points which could have been hafted to spears. Smooth-edged scrapers, common in Neanderthal sites, suggest the preparation of skins and hence probably the manufacture of clothing. We may assume that it was this invention that permitted Neanderthal man to penetrate into the cold country of central Asia as far as Uzbekistan. He often lived in caves and, for the first time in human history, buried his dead rather than eat them or leave them exposed to the elements. It has been argued that the practice of burial implies a conception of an afterlife. If this is true, then we find here the first evidence of religious beliefs and practices.

Some time between 30,000 and 40,000 years ago, completely modern men began to replace the Neanderthals and their relatives. The process of replacement has been more a subject of speculation than of serious study, but some general statements can be made about it. The modern types probably evolved over a fairly broad area rather than in some delimited locality. Apparently they flourished because they developed a more efficient food economy and consequently increased in number, rather than because of any innate physical superiority. They did not simply drive out or kill off the Neanderthals and other races; they also interbred with them. The earlier population patterns disappeared because they represented a minority contribution to the new gene pools. Taking the inhabited world as a whole, the replacement took place gradually, so that Neanderthal-like men may have lasted almost to the end of the Pleistocene in certain regions.

Throughout Europe, North Africa, and southern Asia, the new peoples carried with them a new kind of culture known as Upper Paleolithic. Their stone artifacts were made on the long, narrow, parallel-sided flakes known as blades, and they included many highly specialized tools and weapons. Bone and antler also became popular in the manufacture of artifacts. Spears were now definitely tipped with stone and bone points. Spear-throwers, harpoons, and traps made hunting more efficient. There is some evidence suggesting that a lunar calendar was used to keep track of the seasonal movements of game. It also seems that Upper Paleolithic men practiced encircling techniques, joining together to surround herds and drive them off cliffs. The efficiency of these new hunting techniques is eloquently attested by the enormous quantities of animal bones found in Upper Paleolithic archaeological sites.

The Upper Paleolithic also provides the earliest evidence of the construction of artificial shelters. House floors excavated in Czechoslovakia and southern Russia show that when Upper Paleolithic man was not living in caves he erected tents of considerable size. Perhaps the most significant aspect of these sites is that they show that several households lived together in a single encampment.

Another remarkable feature of Upper Paleolithic culture was its highly developed art. Aesthetic activities in earlier periods seem to have been limited to the refinement of the visual qualities of stone tools. In Upper Paleolithic Europe, however, we find the development of painting, sculpture, and personal ornament. The most famous artworks are the cave paintings of France and Spain. Bison, mammoths, horses, deer, and other game animals are the most common subjects, but there are also a few human portrayals (including one of a dancer wearing a deer-head mask) and some possibly symbolic geometric figures. Painting styles underwent a gradual evolution during Upper Paleolithic times, culminating in the beautiful realistic paintings of the Magdalenian culture at the very end of the Pleistocene. These cave paintings were long dismissed as of interest only to the archaeologist, but nowadays the Magdalenian paintings are generally recognized as being among the greatest works of art that man has produced.

Upper Paleolithic sculpture was generally executed in bone or ivory. The pieces are all quite small, and range from delicate engravings to three-dimensional figures. As with the paintings, the primary interest was in animal figures. It is the little female figurines, however, that have captured the attention of archaeologists and laymen alike. These carvings, the "Venuses," show women with greatly exaggerated breasts, bellies, and buttocks. The sculptors took so little interest in the face that the head is often no more than a featureless blob.

The cave paintings, engravings, and carvings of animals were apparently intended as hunting magic—"art for meat's sake," as the great anthropologist E. A. Hooton put it. Similarly, the Venus figures are considered to be the tangible reflections of household fertility cults, and the common practice of painting and ornamenting the dead before burial has been related to beliefs about an afterlife. There is, of course, no way of proving these hypotheses. In any case, his development of such sophisticated art and the special care he gave the dead indicate that Upper Paleolithic man enjoyed a much richer spiritual life than any of his predecessors.

The last great expansion of the human world took place during the Late Pleistocene. Man moved southeast into Australia and northward into Siberia. From Siberia he crossed the Bering Strait on the land bridge that existed during glacial times. Eastern Siberia and Alaska were free of glaciation and hence open to migration, and corridors southward through Canada opened up periodically when the glaciers retreated temporarily. We cannot yet date this first migration to the New World with any precision, but before the end of the Pleistocene man had occupied the unglaciated portions of Canada and the United States and had moved southward into large parts of South America.

With the end of the Pleistocene, about 10,000 years ago, the world's environments underwent many drastic changes. Thermal levels rose, the glaciers retreated, the seas rose rapidly, and many well-watered areas began to dry out. With the diminution of the great Pleistocene grasslands, the environments of the lower latitudes became more diversified. At the same time, many of the large game animals became extinct. Herds still roamed the remaining grasslands—zebra and antelope on the African savanna, bison on the North American plains, guanaco on the Argentine pampas—but elsewhere the remaining species of large mammals became comparatively scarce.

In adapting to the diversified and impoverished environments, men in different regions developed many new and different cultures. Compared with those of the Pleistocene, the Holocene cultures displayed far more regional differentiation and changed far more rapidly. Of the many innovations of the Postglacial epoch, two are particularly important because they have revolutionized the life of almost all humanity. These are plant cultivation and animal husbandry. These new techniques made possible sedentary year-round settlements and led to the growth of large, dense populations and of the urban, stratified, specialized, politically organized societies that we call civilizations.

Cultivation and animal husbandry developed separately in at least two broad areas: southern Asia from Mesopotamia to China, and America

from Mexico to Peru. The principal cultivated plants in the nuclear area of the Old World were wheat, barley, and (in the Far East) rice, the first domesticated animals were cattle, sheep, goats, and pigs. In the New World the main plants were maize, beans, potatoes, and manioc. The latter two, as well as the domestic llama, alpaca, and guinea pig, were restricted to South America.

All available evidence points to the Near East as the area where these revolutionary developments first began. The natural habitats of the wild plants and animals were in the hills surrounding the Fertile Crescent on the north and east. The earliest known remains of domestic species, as well as the earliest large sedentary settlements based on agriculture, have been found in Israel, Syria, Turkey, Iraq, and Iran, with a very early extension westward to Greece. Sheep were domesticated in northern Iraq not long after 9000 B.C., wheat and barley in southwestern Iran by 7000 B.C. The cereals were probably cultivated still earlier in the western part of the area, for a substantial walled town was built at Jericho Oasis in the Jordan Valley about 7000 B.C., and it is almost impossible that so large a settlement could have existed in the Palestinian desert without an agricultural base.

In the New World the first centers of cultivation seem to have been in the highlands of Mexico, where squash was being grown before 5000 B.C. and maize, beans, and other plants by shortly after that date. Though these plants diffused southward to Peru at an early date, the South American staples (potatoes in the Andes and manioc in the tropical lowlands) and domestic animals are not known until after about 2000 B.C.

With the exception of manioc and perhaps rice (neither of which was among the earliest cultigens), the major cultivated plants and domestic animals of both the Old and New Worlds were derived from wild ancestors adapted to highlands environments. In both areas the earliest farmers were nomadic food gatherers in semiarid areas who relied on both wild grains and hunting, but who also exploited many other resources in order to survive. Within the nuclear highlands areas cultivation did not have any immediate profound effects on the way of life. The pattern of seasonal migration continued for a long time. The new crops served as no more than supplements to the diet of wild foods. It was when the cultigens were carried into new environments, especially lowlands areas, that they stimulated new experiments in agriculture, provided the economic base for rapid population growth, and spurred the development of towns and cities.

For Further Reading

Bordes, François, *The Old Stone Age*.
Clark, Grahame, *World Prehistory*.

The Ancient Near East

5 Mesopotamia

History begins in the Near East. As we have seen, the cradle of humanity lies probably elsewhere, but the historian's narrative cannot begin at the creation of the first Adam. The slow biological emergence of *Homo sapiens*, the sort of human being we are, precedes history, and the greater part of the existence of *Homo sapiens* also ran before the beginning of history. The essential difference between "prehistory" and "history" is mental. "History" means the conscious and intentional remembrance of things past, in a living tradition transmitted from one generation to another. For this there must be some continuous organization, be it the family of the chieftain in the beginning, or the school today, which has reason to care for the Past of the group and has the capacity for transmitting the historical tradition to future generations. History exists only in a persisting society which needs history to persist.

But a continuous and persisting society was late in coming. It came into being first in the Near East, and thus the historical tradition of Babylon and Egypt became the fountainhead of our historical memory. Many of our fairy tales may go back to the imagination of men who lived long before the foundation of Babylon or in the regions, such as north Europe, which remained outside the historical tradition that began in the Near East. But no living memory links us with the inventors of fire, with the masters who some 15,000 years ago painted walls of caves in France and in the Ural Mountains, or with the builders who, perhaps about 2000 B.C., began to erect the still-standing monoliths at Stonehenge in England. These men left signs, and they knew what those signs meant, but they left no written words, and their message cannot be clearly understood by us.

The pyramids, however, not only astonished every generation which succeeded their builders, but every new generation also learned that these gigantic edifices were royal tombs; Cheops, the name of the Pharaoh of the Great Pyramid, was known to the Greek historian Herodotus, who lived

B.C.	10,000	Wooden reaping knives set with flint blades used in Palestine
	9000	End of the Ice Age, domesticated sheep in the North Tigris valley
	7700–5700	Çatal Huyuk in Turkey; obsidian mined for tools, fertility cult indicates use of domesticated cattle
	7500	Extensive settlement at Jericho, weaving, fortification, remains of cultivated cereals
	7000	Pottery begins
	6500	Copper used in Turkey for trinkets, a dugout canoe used in Holland
	6000	Farming in Macedonia, pottery plentiful
	5000	Use of copper in Mesopotamia begins
	3300	Writing begins in Sumer, wheeled vehicles and wheel-made pottery, sailboats, and animal-drawn plows in Sumer; agriculture reaches Ireland
	3100	Invention of hieroglyphic writing in Egypt
	3000	Sumerian fashions prevalent in Ashur
	2800	Akkadian conquest of the Diyala region
	2700	Agriculture reaches China, royal inscriptions appear in Sumer; Sumerian script used in Akkad; Sumerian fashions prevalent in Mari
	2500	Writing in Mari (Sumerian script), keeping of daily accounts in Sumer; the pyramids completed
	2400	Writing in Assyria (Sumerian script)
	2350	Sargon I of Agade, first known empire
	2300	Copper common in Sumer; writing in the Indus Valley (local script)
	2250	Fall of the dynasty of Sargon
	2100–2000	Supremacy of Ur in lower Mesopotamia
	2100	The laws of Ur-Nammu of Ur, the earliest preserved lawbook
	1800	Assyrian temple built for a Sumerian god (Enlil)
	1750	Hammurabi of Babylon rules most of Mesopotamia, financial transactions in Sumer and Addad now commonly in silver
	1600	Fall of the dynasty of Hammurabi

midway between his time and our own. The ancient Egyptian language can still be heard daily in the Coptic churches, and the word "Coptic," through the Greek word *Aiguptos*, comes from the Egyptian name of Memphis, the first capital of the land on the Nile. "Babylon" has been a byword for four millennia, and some of the first pages of the Bible echo the voices of story tellers who instructed or amused their audiences on the banks of the Euphrates 5,000 years ago. For this reason, the archaeologists' discoveries of a forgotten kingdom or of an unknown language in the Near East fall within the scheme of our historical tradition. For the same reason, in the Near East, history imperceptibly leads back to prehistory. Therefore the historian has to go back to the beginning of the stable societies in the Near East where the idea of history was born.

As long as *Homo sapiens*, like his near-man ancestors and predecessors, was solely hunter, fisher, and collector of wild fruits and vegetables, there could be no persisting society. Like the other predatory beasts, man needed an enormous space for maintenance. English prehistorians believe that at this stage the total population of England and Wales amounted to no more than three or four thousand souls. This sparse population consisted of very small groups, a few families living together. To the present day the food-collecting bands in the Amazon basin comprise about twenty persons each, including children. Such groups were unstable biologically and socially. It appears from skeletal remains that two-thirds of the newborn died as babies, that at least a third of those who survived infancy died before the procreative age, and that almost all adults died before fifty. Like wild animals, men rarely lived beyond the age of fecundity.

This brevity of human life, together with a very high infant mortality (perhaps 75 per cent), casts doubt on the common explanation of the origin of agriculture as a result of the need of an increasing population. Perhaps food production should be connected with the domestication of animals, which must often have been attempted before it eventually succeeded. Dogs may have been tamed already by hunters in the food-gathering period. The domesticated sheep seems to have been known east of the upper Tigris about 9000. But the relation of the domestication of animals to that of cereals is enigmatic, and the latter remains a problem. Cultivation of cereals could originate only in a territory where these plants grew wild and man already reaped them. Why should he sweat to cultivate what he could get without any preparatory work?

Abel, the shepherd, was a child of nature. The farmer forces nature, and the history of our civilization begins with Cain, the first farmer. Agriculture, whatever its origins, made a stable society both possible and necessary. Husbandry not only provided more food and did it more reliably, but above all it furnished a sort of food, grain, which could be

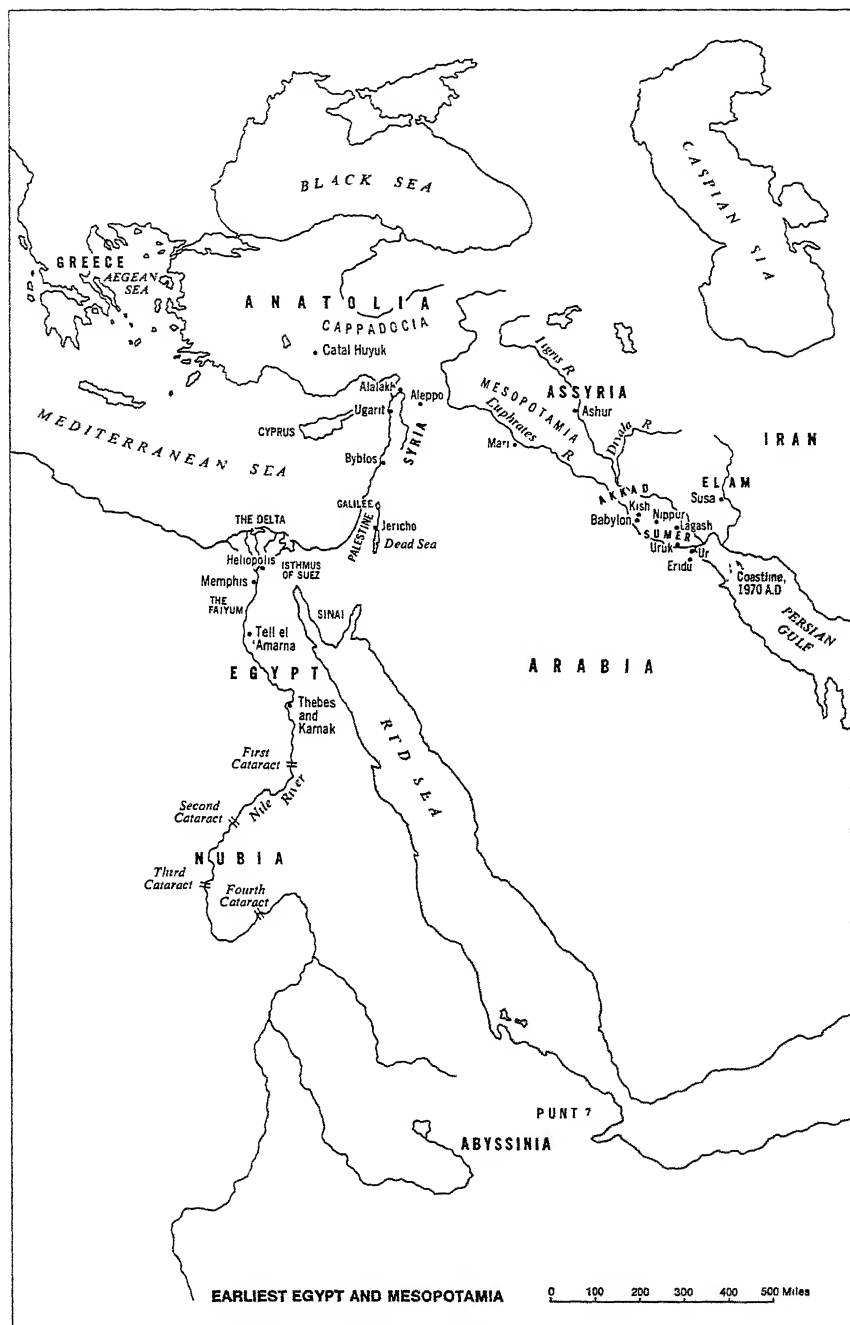
stored in pits for a long time to tide the society over those months when nothing else was available. Thus agriculture became and remained the foundation of civilized life.

The change to agriculture meant also a mental change. Man began to correct nature, and he did so with his eye on the future. Every *techné*, as Aristotle says, requires the idea of a result before the material realization of that result can be achieved. The men who learned to fell trees in the forests which began to cover the temperate regions of the Northern Hemisphere after the Ice Age, say after 9000, were no less ingenious than the first agriculturalists. In a modern experiment more than one hundred birch trees were felled with one polished stone ax, made and sharpened in Denmark about 4,000 years ago. However, the agriculturalist worked not for today, nor even for tomorrow, but for a distant and uncertain objective which was very remote when he planted a tree. The future had become for him a far-off yet foreseeable time. Symmetrically, the Past became valuable. Today was now a station on the long road from the Past to the Future.

The archaeological evidence, as well as the distribution of wild species of the earliest known domesticated plants and animals, points to the region from Iran to Palestine as the laboratory of the incipient agriculture and, thus, the birthplace of stable society and historical memory. It was a long process which probably began in the ninth millennium, of selection of seeds, of learning the elements of sowing, tending, and reaping cereals, of inventing and improving tools. For instance, the reaping knife set with flint blades was used in Palestine about 10,000, if only for cutting wild grass. The earliest known remains of cultivated cereals date from the eighth millennium: einkorn and emmer, two varieties of wheat which are no longer cultivated, and a type of barley. Our bread wheat is first attested somewhat later in Asia Minor. Goats and, probably, pigs were soon added to farm animals bred by man. At Çatal Huyuk in central Turkey, by the middle of the seventh millennium, people were worshiping a fertility goddess whom they represented in the act of giving birth to a man, a bull, and a ram.

We do not know why agriculture began in the Near East, rather than elsewhere, but it did so, and from here the art of farming spread to the four corners of the world, reaching Ireland by 3500 and China in the third millennium. For the civilized peoples of the Near East, nomads were now barbarians "who knew no grain."

The increased supply of food made the expansion of mankind possible. In the comparatively large and stable settlements of the new age—Çatal Huyuk was inhabited without interruption for at least 2,000 years until its destruction about 5700—men went on to discover new components of



civilized life and to develop chance discoveries (which may have been made many times before) into techniques, and perpetuate them by regular practice as part of the cultural tradition. The wealth of Çatal Huyuk depended on mining the black obsidian in the neighboring volcanic mountains. As before, weapons and tools were made of stone, bones, and wood. Copper was used already in the seventh millennium, at least in Turkey, but only for trinkets. In Palestine we find the earliest known extensive human settlement—at Jericho, where the inhabitants had domesticated barley and sheep before 7000.

The first of the major new techniques were probably weaving and pottery making. The earliest known woven fabric was apparently of hemp, which began to be worked in the eighth millennium. The invention of pottery by itself is not so important; men could use stone vessels, baskets, and so on, as well. Yet, potter's clay—a combination of earth, water, and some ingredient (grit, straw) to prevent cracking—was the first artificial material manufactured by man. Its production required know-how. To make a pot and bake it hard required more know-how. Consequently, the art spread slowly. The invention was made somewhere in the Near East, probably around 7000. By 6000 pottery was already plentiful at Çatal Huyuk as well as at a farming settlement (Nea Nicomedia) in Macedonia. But some centuries later, pottery was still not known in Jericho and other sites in the Near East. Only gradually, during the sixth millennium, did its use become practically universal. Since styles of decoration and of manufacture (the make-up of clay, the shapes of the vessels) varied at different manufacturing sites and changed in the course of time, and since potsherds were neither easily destroyed nor worth carrying off, the remains of pottery have become the most important tool of the archaeologists for dating finds and ascertaining cultural contacts.

Pottery soon began to be painted with crescents, circles, and other motifs. Some designs imitated basketwork, others reproduced human faces. Here, for the first time, decoration expresses an abstract thought: though not a basket, this pot is *like* a basket. The purpose behind such decoration may sometimes have been magical.

In the second half of the fifth millennium, when the benefits of farming were already recognized in the whole Near East, some adventurous and imaginative men dared to colonize a country about the size of New Jersey between and around the lower courses of the Tigris and the Euphrates rivers. They did not come from the piedmont zone in the north (Assyria) which, fertilized by bountiful rains, was already tilled in the sixth millennium, but from Iran or from the Persian Gulf through the estuaries of the Tigris and the Euphrates.

We do not know who these pioneers were. Their neighbors in the north called them Sumerians; they called themselves "the dark-headed" and designated their country simply as "the land." Skeletal remains show that most inhabitants of Sumer were heavily boned, short men with long and narrow heads. Yet their sculptors represented them as round-headed. Their agglutinative language is not related to any other known tongue. Many geographical names in Sumer as well as many words relating to farming and other skills appear to have been borrowed by the Sumerians from some other language, perhaps that of a preceding wave of immigrants.

Sumer was a flat land of brown dust and mud, swept by stormy winds (the Babylonians believed that the sky had been forced apart from the earth by the wind) and devastated by unpredictable inundations of the twin rivers. In Mesopotamia the flood, which punishes sinful men, was first experience and then myth.

The first settlements of the colonists were huts in marshes alongside watercourses of the lower Euphrates. A Babylonian myth recalls how, in the primordial time, a god constructed a reed frame on the face of the waters and, pouring mud on it, made the floor of a hut. Had the Sumerians failed, they would have remained marsh dwellers like the present inhabitants of the same swamps, who still live in reed huts where the miry floor often oozes water at every step.

Through relentless toil guided by imagination, the Sumerians slowly transformed their perilous land into one of milk and grain, of date palms and sesame herbs. A Sumerian myth preserves a memory of the introduction of cereals from the eastern mountains. But in Sumer the poor wild barley became our barley which bears six rows. Dates, which are very nutritive, were the poor man's stock food in Mesopotamia. The exploitation of date palms demands knowledge of artificial pollination and also the gift of anticipatory patience. The farmer, who erected a mud wall around his trees, had to tend them five long years before they began to yield fruit.

The land had no stone and no metals. By firing clay at a temperature of 1,200 degrees the Sumerians fabricated clay blades which could be used as sickles. Happily, their alluvial plain required no water-raising devices.

The farmer, according to a Sumerian myth, was "a man of dikes and canals." He did not depend on rain, therefore he did not fear drought: as the modern experience of the Near East shows, he could feed ten times as many people as the farmer on an equal plot in the lands dependent on rain. The canals served as waterways and fishpounds, they watered palm groves and rich grasslands which furnished feed for sheep and cattle, and grain fields of fabulous fertility which could be reaped thrice a year. Herodotus heard that in Babylonia grain yielded two and three hundredfold. Barley production made possible feeding of sheep and cattle during the unbearably

hot summer. The crop of cereals came in the spring and that of dates in the fall. With the products of their husbandry the Sumerians paid for the raw materials which were wanting in Sumer. In a Sumerian saga, a king of old gives grain to a ruler in Iran, but demands in return precious metals, gems, and building stone for the temple of his goddess.

Eridu, the southernmost city of Sumer, "situated on the shore of the sea" (the Persian Gulf), was also according to tradition the earliest; its foundation antedated the end of the fifth millennium. The first Sumerian cities were small mud settlements of 15 to 20 acres each. Soon house walls were made of mud bricks joined by bitumen. As the Book of Genesis says of Babylon: "They had bricks for stone and slime had they for mortar." When the settlers became richer, they built shrines on platforms made waterproof with bitumen. Raised higher and higher, the terraced, multi-storied temple towers appear in the Bible as "the tower of Babel" challenging the heavens. As with medieval cathedrals, the Sumerian temples, now separated by enclosing walls, dominated the city and proclaimed its power and wealth.

In this age of the first cathedrals, probably around 3300, the Sumerians made their greatest contribution to the advance of civilization: the invention of writing. Many primitive peoples, such as the American Indians, have used pictures to convey messages, for instance a call to a raid. But the pictures necessarily referred to some concrete and particular fact. The Sumerian writing differed qualitatively from pictographs of primitive peoples. The schematic designs of objects (head, fish, and so on) here denoted species, and the signs, thus, were valid permanently. The Sumerians had different words for woman and her pudendum. But in writing, the design of the latter stood for the idea of woman. The picture of a foot also came to connote such different words as "to stand," "to go," and "to bring."

Using such pictorial symbols, a scribe could record "52 head of cattle." More complex ideas were expressed in the fashion of rebus: the combination of signs of "woman" and "mountain" denoted a female slave. (Slaves were bought from the mountain peoples around the valley.) The system was adequate for its original purpose: business accounting of temples.

Then the Sumerians (and, two centuries or so later, the Egyptians) made the decisive advance. They realized that the same syllabic sounds could appear in different words, so that the picture of fish, *ha* in Sumerian, could also indicate the syllable *ha* in other words. Since the Sumerian language consisted of unchangeable and variously combined monosyllables, a syllable became a writing unit and Sumerian writing came to consist chiefly of two sorts of signs—syllable signs and word signs. The Sumerians, having no cheap writing material but clay, wrote with a reed stylus on unbaked clay tablets. The end of a reed can easily be pressed into

soft clay so as to make a wedge-shaped mark. Thus, the originally pictorial signs were reduced to mere wedges and combinations of wedges. Accordingly, we call this script "cuneiform," from the Latin word *cuneus*, meaning wedge. A sun-dried clay tablet is not likely to be destroyed, so an enormous quantity of records (close to half a million tablets) has come down to us in the ruins of ancient buildings.

The Sumerians and the Egyptians were not alone in the forefront of civilization about 3000. During the third millennium, other "irrigation" societies flourished also on the Indus and east and south of the Caspian Sea, and societies based on the use of metals prospered in Palestine and Asia Minor. Pictographic script was employed in the Indus Valley between about 2300 and 1700. Did the city of Susa in Elam, which also had a pictographic script in the third millennium, invent syllabic writing? We do not know.

The historian should not confuse facts and their recording. The earliest written reference to a boat comes from Sumer. However, a dugout canoe discovered in Holland was constructed about 6250, that is about 3,000 years before the invention of writing in Sumer. In this way archaeological discoveries supplement and correct written sources. Yet these discoveries are accidental. The earliest extant musical instruments come from royal graves in Ur. This surely does not mean that men did not play harp, lyre, and oboe before 2500. Above all, objects are mute; their sign language has to be interpreted with the help of written sources. The use of writing changed the mode of historical memory. Thereafter, until our age of audio-vision, eye, and not ear, counted. What had not been written down was lost forever. According to a later story, Enmekar, a legendary ruler of Uruk, had to drink foul water in the nether world because he had not left a written record of his victories for the instruction of future generations.

Our narrative must willy-nilly follow the course of written tradition which links us with the Sumerians, the Egyptians, and their heirs while neglecting peoples who were often no less gifted in other respects, but remained illiterate.

By 3300 B.C., when writing began, the Sumerians already used sail-boats, wheeled vehicles, and animal-drawn plows. They invented the first industrial machine providing continuous rotary motion: the potter's wheel which spins the clay as the craftsman shapes it. From Sumer this device invaded the whole Old World. In the third millennium technological and economic advances continued unabated. The walls of Uruk, built about 2700, were 18 feet thick and had a circumference of about 6 miles. The enclosed area provided refuge to men and cattle from the whole territory of the city. Metal tools became common: copper and bronze objects have been found in about 15 per cent of the graves in Ur dating about 2800, and in

80 per cent of the graves of three centuries later. By 2300 a Sumerian could buy a copper ax for the price of two sheep. A yoke was invented for harnessing draft animals, and shadoofs for raising water helped the gardener. Sumerians had the means for distilling barley beer, they also knew how to prepare medicinal drugs and cosmetics, and they could manufacture imitation precious stones.

The artisans' skills, taught orally and by imitation, were immediately usable for tanning hides or carving a statue. Reading and writing by themselves enabled the learner only to read and write. The essential problem of liberal education was and is: What to read? Nevertheless, the method of writing was so complex that merely to learn to read and write demanded a long and arduous training. This divided a small "white-collar" class of scribes from the mass of ignorant workers. School and apprenticeship, head and hand, now became separated. As a Sumerian text says, a son sent to a scribal school did not learn to plow his father's field. The function of the scribal school was rather to furnish secretaries, accountants, revenue officers, and other functionaries. This self-perpetuating bureaucracy produced an enormous quantity of written tablets. From about 2500 there were daily accounts, and monthly and yearly summaries of these accounts which carefully distinguished between food given to pigs and that given to piglets, and so on. Toward the end of the third millennium the standard unit of work—a "man-day"—appeared for calculating payments to unskilled workers. Such "paper work" was essential for keeping a complex economy going. Without a scribe counting every bunch of vegetables that left the temple stores there would soon be no food for daily rations of cattle and of dairymen.

Having learned to read, the scribes began to write. Soon book catalogs were required and compiled. Royal inscriptions began about 2700, the earliest yet known lawbook was promulgated by Ur-Nammu, a king of Ur, about 2100. Between these two dates the scribes created the first literature, ranging from epics to love songs.

These books reinforced the cultural unity of Sumer: the same books were read in Ur and in Nippur. However, in a civilization where reading and writing were so rare that some kings boasted of their mastery of these skills, the oral lore must have remained of great importance in shaping men's minds. The story of creation recited during the Babylonian New Year's feast ends with the appeal to the faithful to recite and impart to their sons the fifty names of the god Marduk which expressed his various powers. Yet the oral traditional has been lost and, except for the buildings and works of art, we see Sumer only as it appears in the writings of the Sumerian scribes.

Sumer consisted of a dozen small cities with their respective territories.

From Eridu one could see Ur United by language, custom, and common gods, united also in contempt for the barbarians of the western desert and of the mountains to the east, these independent cities were in eternal conflict one with another for meadows and water rights As a proverb put it: "You go and take the field of the enemy, the enemy comes and takes your field."

Although each city was ruled by an absolute monarch, absolutism did not mean despotism As Athens was the city of Athena, the boundaries and fields of Lagash belonged to the god Ningirsu to whom Lagash had been assigned by the supreme, fate-determining deities The ruler served as a bailiff of the gods, bidden by them to promote the weal of the city. He represented the community before the deity, but not the deity before the community. He had to observe the recognized rules of behavior and compel recalcitrants to do the same Maintaining justice in the land, he saw to it that children supported their aged parents and he supervised weights and measures. The rights of private property, the only sure foundation of civil liberty, were sacred. The king himself had to pay for the land he wanted A little man no less than a magnate had his rightful place in the city Men were created to toil for the gods, and the professions were usually hereditary There were no estates in the body politic Accordingly, the rulers proclaimed that powerful men should not oppress widows and orphans, nor should a "man of one shekel" fall a prey to a man of many shekels. Slaves, mostly prisoners of war, were mainly used as household servants.

Royal despotism was also restrained by the economic power of the temples Sacred land was inalienable; thus, with every generation, the temples became richer. In the twenty-fifth century, at Lagash, the ecclesiastical landed property amounted to perhaps a third of the territory of the city. A part of the sacred land was exploited directly by the temple; the rest was either given to temple personnel to supplement their food rations, or rented to sharecroppers. The temples had also their own craftsmen, from jewelers to carpenters, from fishers to merchants, and employed slaves in temple shops, particularly slave women in spinning. Since almost all our documentation comes from the temple archives, the role of secular property in Sumerian society must remain hazy for us. The rulers tried to obtain control of the sacred estates. They appointed themselves and members of their families high priests of the main temples. But the temples persisted while the rulers were mortal.

The king had to build temples and canals, but from the beginning he was also a war leader, at first represented as conquering enemies and killing lions single-handed. On one stele, the king of Lagash throws the god's net over the enemy. But by this time (the middle of the third millennium) victory had come to be conceived as a result of collective action.

On the same stele from Lagash the same king also leads his troops into battle. A stele from Ur pictures the king receiving the booty captured by his soldiers.

The army consisted of chariotry and infantry. The solid-wheeled chariots were drawn, it seems, by a now extinct species of asses. A warrior in each chariot hurled javelins into the enemy's ranks. The heavy infantry marched in several files; all soldiers wore the same uniform and carried the same weapons: short spears in Ur, heavy pikes and axes in Lagash. Were these disciplined battalions the king's retainers or the city militia? We do not know.

The battles pictured on Sumerian monuments and described in royal inscriptions were caused by squabbles between neighboring cities about irrigation, or by raids of barbarian tribes from the mountains of Persia in the east and of desert nomads from the west. But in the meantime, the populations to the north, from modern Baghdad up the two rivers, passed from barbarism to civilization. These men called their land *Akkad* and spoke a Semitic language, that is, a language of the great family to which Arabic, Hebrew, Phoenician, Egyptian, and most of the languages of the Near East belong. The Akkadians had long been in contact with the Sumerians: Akkadian Babylon was only 10 miles from Sumerian Kish. There was a steady infiltration of Akkadians into Sumer, and Akkadians soon became captivated by the Sumerian way of life. As far north as the city of Ashur, from about 3000, and as far northwest as Mari, on the middle Euphrates, from about 2700, men and gods lived in Sumerian fashion and were portrayed as if they were Sumerians.

The Sumerians never tried to extend their political power northward, and the Akkadians and their relatives to the north and west were busy protecting their cities from nomads and mountaineers, and colonizing the affluents of the twin rivers. For instance, by 2800 they occupied the Diyala region east of the Tigris. Meanwhile they eagerly took over the cultural achievements of the south. By 2700 they had adopted the Sumerian script for their own language. They probably did it first for some limited purpose, say accounting, but thus, unwittingly, they appropriated the secret of Sumerian power.

Toward the middle of the twenty-fourth century, Sargon I, from Agade, near Babylon, an Akkadian minister of the Sumerian king of Kish, subjugated Sumer and founded the first known empire, which extended from the Mediterranean to the Persian Gulf. His inscriptions were written in both Sumerian and Akkadian. Enlil, the supreme god of Sumer, made him without peer and gave him Elam, in the east. But in his western campaigns he knelt to the Semitic god Dagon, who gave him the "Upper Land." For

later ages, Sargon became the prototype of the emperor. An Akkadian narrative about this "King of Battle" was still read a thousand years after his death.

His grandson Naramsin was the first ruler who proclaimed himself the lord of the world ("King of the four regions") and put the cuneiform sign of divinity before his name. On a relief, he, much taller than the other figures, is represented as fighting alone. His soldiers follow him in a loose formation. They have axes and spears, but the king shoots arrows. The use of bows in warfare and the breaking of the solid ranks of the Sumerian phalanx go together. The power of the Sargonid dynasty was based on the loyalty of its household troops. 5,400 men who ate bread daily before Sargon.

In a civilization where donkeys were the fastest means of overland transport, empires broke up and local powers survived. About 2250 the house of Sargon was swept away by barbarians from the east. At the end of the next century, the rulers of Ur, adopting the new title "Kings of Sumer and Akkad," reunited Mesopotamia from the Persian Sea to the Zagros Mountains. Some 18,000 records from local archives show centralization of government and economy under the new rule: 21,799 men were mobilized and paid for harvesting fields around Nippur.

The supremacy of Ur lasted 108 years. Then Ur was sacked by the Elamites and the other cities regained their independence until two centuries later, in the 1700's, Hammurabi of Babylon imposed his power on the land down the stream. Thereafter, Babylon was the hub of the world. Akkadian became the language of administration and business; the importance of Sumerian cities decreased and the Sumerian language died.

No natural frontier separated Sumer from the Semites, north and west. Semites probably joined the Sumerians in their colonization venture and continuously immigrated into Sumerian land. Akkadian words appear in the earliest Sumerian texts. Sumerian was intelligible only in Sumer while Akkadian, a Semitic dialect, was understood from Babylon to Egypt. The Sumerians, an exotic minority at the southern end of their universe, could preserve their separate nationality and impose their isolated language only so long as they enjoyed the monopoly of learning. Having taught everything they knew to the Akkadians, they were absorbed. The title "King of Sumer and Akkad" was still held by the Assyrian kings a thousand years after Hammurabi. But Hammurabi's fourth successor spoke of his subjects as "Akkadians and Amorites," the latter being Semitic invaders and immigrants from the western countries.

Yet the Babylonians won and kept their preeminence only by becoming Sumerians spiritually. They studied Sumerian without end, and in the scribal school a student whose mother tongue was Sumerian looked down

on his Akkadian fellows. Only with the help of Sumerian grammars and lexicons compiled in Akkadian by the Babylonians is it possible for us to read Sumerian texts (Akkadian texts were deciphered by analogy from the other Semitic languages.) Sumerian texts mostly come down to us in copies made by Babylonian scribes, just as we know Latin authors mainly through medieval manuscripts.

In fact, Babylonians and Assyrians identified themselves with the vanishing Sumerians. About 1800, an Assyrian king built a temple in an Assyrian city to his "Lord" Enlil, the supreme god of the Sumerians. Some decades later, Hammurabi called his subjects "the black-headed," the name which the Sumerians used for themselves. The Sumerians conquered their conquerors.

Our documentation for the period of Hammurabi's dynasty (eighteenth to sixteenth centuries) is abundant but again lopsided. Unlike Sumerian documents, which come from temples and palaces, it mainly concerns private persons. Hammurabi's laws help us to redress the balance. Still copied a millennium after his death, they constitute no systematic code. The 282 preserved articles of his collection, though many of them reproduce earlier enactments, deal with the legal questions which were acute in his time.

In pre-Hammurabi laws a bodily injury was compensated by the payment of damages, 60 shekels for a lost eye, and so on. In the laws of Hammurabi the system remained the same for a *mušhkenum*, a free man of lesser degree, but if a "gentleman" blinded an eye of another "gentleman" the principle of exact retaliation was applied: An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth. Hammurabi does not say anything about the bodily injury inflicted on a "gentleman" by a *mušhkenum*, but we can be sure it brought dire consequences. Hammurabi's point of view was pragmatic. The bodily integrity of a rich man was worth more than that of a poor man, and conversely a rich man could afford bigger medical expenses. Thus, the legal fee for an eye operation on a "gentleman" was twice as much as the fee to be paid by a *mušhkenum*.

The principle that social status determined one's rights and obligations also applied to slaves and women. The slave's function was to work for his owner. A citizen who blinded the eye of a slave paid a half of the latter's value to the owner. But except for his relation to his owner, a slave remained a person. He could own property, engage in litigation, and so on. He could marry a free woman, in which case their children were treated as free. Our term "slave" is actually a misnomer for him. He was rather a perpetual servant. The same Babylonian word that meant "slave" also meant a king's "minister."

The function of a wife was to provide her husband with legitimate sons.

Therefore, the adulterous wife and her paramour were both drowned (But men could have secondary or temporary wives and slave concubines.) In all matters unrelated to their wifely functions, however, women were independent. They could own, buy, and sell property, lend and borrow money, and so on. A widow was free to remarry.

In the farming society of Mesopotamia, barley functioned as money and hired hands were generally paid in rations, men receiving twice as much as women. The sign meaning "price" and "buying" originally contained the picture of a grain measure. Silver, an imported material, mainly served to pay for other imports. All merchants, however, based their accounts on silver, and by the time of Hammurabi, virtually all business transactions were evaluated in silver (not, of course, in "money," for the silver was not coined). Artisans were paid in silver, shepherds in barley. The silver economy favored the capitalist. (The economic use of our word "capital," from the Latin *caput*, meaning "head," goes back to a Babylonian term which also meant "head" and had the same economic significance.) A bushel of seed yielded a harvest of some thirty bushels. Thus, in a normal year, a debt in barley could easily be repaid in kind at harvest time, although the customary interest amounted to $33\frac{1}{3}$ per cent. But if a debt and its interest had to be paid in silver, the case was altered. The price of barley went down at harvest time, the usual term of a farmer's loan. Yet, to repay his silver debt, the farmer had to measure out barley "on the threshing floor" according to the current rate of exchange, as the loan contract stipulated. He was now at the mercy of the money market. A son who had borrowed 17 shekels to redeem his father from bondage had to sell himself because "he had no silver." A ruler of Uruk, in the nineteenth century, boasted that his reign was a time of such abundance that one shekel of silver bought three times as much barley as usual.

Hammurabi decreed that the "merchant"—that is, the professional moneylender—must accept payment from ordinary borrowers in grain and other commodities even for a silver loan, at a rate of exchange set forth by the royal ordinance. On the other hand, loans between merchants, even of commodities, had to be repaid in silver.

A century later, a successor of Hammurabi, proclaiming a general cancellation of debts, significantly excluded commercial loans. Thus, Babylonian documents illustrate the truth of the view of the Federalist Papers that the conflict between landed and moneyed interests "grows up of necessity in the civilized nations" and that the regulation of such conflicts forms "the principal task of the legislator."

The hegemony of Babylon was as short-lived as that of the Sumerian cities. Hammurabi dominated the Sumerian south and conquered Mari on the middle Euphrates only in the last ten years of his forty-two-year reign.

Thereafter, the Babylonian realm began to shrink, and Hammurabi's dynasty ended 125 years after his death when a Cassite chieftain from the Zagros Mountains seized Babylon. The Cassite dynasty allegedly reigned for 576 years, but Babylon was no longer a great power and the little land between the twin rivers lost its leadership

Ancient Mesopotamia was rich only in cattle and agricultural produce. There were only two ways to acquire gold and silver: foreign war and foreign trade. A Babylonian story credits King Sargon with an expedition to protect merchants in Asia Minor. According to another text, Marduk, god of Babylon, spent twenty-four years in Asia Minor establishing caravan traffic between that country and Babylonia. In fact, Mesopotamia necessarily depended on waterways for transporting its bulky agricultural surplus, and the influence of Mesopotamian cities followed the course of the Euphrates. As early as about 2500 a king of Ur sent gifts to a king of Mari. Here, approximately at the latitude of Palmyra and Homs, the Euphrates begins to approach the Mediterranean. Farther north, east of Aleppo, the river flows only 100 miles from the Syrian coast. Though Babylonian agents in the eighteenth century penetrated as far as Hazor in Galilee, such cities as Mari and Aleppo effectively cut off the Mesopotamian cities from their own clients, and there is no reference to Egypt in Mesopotamian texts before the Egyptian conquest of Syria in the fifteenth century.

In the east, the Mesopotamians intermittently succeeded in extending their power as far as Susa, to which they sent wares via the Persian Gulf, but the Elamites in turn raided Mesopotamia.

Up the Tigris, the Assyrians protected Mesopotamia, but also isolated it, from the barbarian north. Whatever may have been the success of Sargon or of the god Marduk in Asia Minor, "Akkadian garments" were sold there by Assyrian intermediaries. In the nineteenth century Ashur established trading stations in the rich copper belt of Cappadocia. Donkey caravans carried tin, which was rare, expensive, and necessary for the production of bronze, a harder alloy of copper. They also carried standardized pieces of cloth and other commodities, and they took home gold and silver. Above all, one people after another appropriated the secret of Mesopotamian success: the art of writing. Rulers of Mari already used cuneiform writing about 2500, and the Assyrians followed a century later, Elamite was written in the same script about 2300. By 1800 Akkadian was a common language of chancelleries in Syria. In Asia Minor the Hittites used Akkadian in the seventeenth century, and soon adapted the cuneiform script to their own language. With the script went the knowledge recorded in writing. Students at Susa, about 1700, not only learned mathematics but solved problems "according to the Babylonian method."

Mesopotamian techniques of predicting the future were also used in

Susa, in Syria, and by the Hittites. The Sumerians had invented office equipment, a necessary tool of bureaucratic organization. They "filed" tablets in baskets by content and labeled each basket accordingly. In the eighteenth century, the kings of Mari used the same device for sorting their profuse correspondence. As a matter of fact, the exercise of statecraft was no longer possible in the Levant without the assistance of scribes. At Alalakh cuneiform tablets in Akkadian appeared toward the end of the eighteenth century when this little town of the kingdom of Aleppo became the seat of a semi-independent dynasty.

Simultaneously, the practical knowledge of Mesopotamian artisans was diffused through the adjacent lands. The spoked wheel, the plow with a seeding attachment, and sewers under street pavements entered into general use. Glazed earthenware was already being made at Alalakh by the sixteenth century.

While Mesopotamia became the southernmost province of the world united by the cuneiform script, it also became more and more remote from the mainstream of history. Copperwork was of great importance in the Mesopotamia of the third millennium; the ore came by the sea, probably from Oman. In the beginning of the second millennium extremely rich sources of this metal, which then was essential for civilized life, began to be exploited in Asia Minor and particularly in Cyprus. Our word "copper" comes from the name of this island. The new sources of wealth were Mediterranean and shifted the center of economic and manufacturing activity away from Mesopotamia.

It is symbolic that toward the middle of the seventeenth century a Hittite king raided Babylon. Soon afterward, the axis of history ran across the Mediterranean; from the Hittite capital, near the Black Sea, to the Egyptian Thebes, some 13 degrees west of Babylon. The Babylonians had become great as the first disciples of the Sumerians; now the peoples of the Mediterranean lands had learned from the Babylonians.

The scribal art diffused from Mesopotamia was a skill like that of a smith. Scribal schools prepared technicians for government, church, and business. Babylonian scribes boasted of their ability in calculating payrolls, delimiting fields, and so on. Just as smiths did not need to know the laws of natural science to perfect the fabrication of daggers, so a scribe learned merely from practice how to balance accounts, write down the meaning of an omen, or choose the appropriate clause of a contract from a convenient list of legal formulas. There were numerous reference works: vocabularies, mathematical tables, lists of animals, plants, stones, drugs and corresponding ailments, medical instructions arranged according to symptoms or parts of the body, collections of texts concerning the techniques of divination and worship, and so on.

Scribe, as well as smith, worked rationally. Babylonian physicians

prescribed potions, ointments, and plasters mainly made of herbs, though the patient more often than not also sought the help of the exorcists and their spells. By 1900, Babylonian scribes handled mathematical operations which in our terms would be cubic equations with two unknowns. They already knew the result of the "Pythagorean" theorem, but no systematic and didactic book like Euclid's *Elements* has been found—no book, that is, which taught the science instead of teaching the problems. A typical Babylonian mathematical exercise would both state a problem—say the calculation for the construction of a dike—and demand its solution, specifying every step. Much later, probably in the fifth century, Babylonian scribes began to develop a very sophisticated theory of lunar phases which was necessary for calendar reckoning. Neither in astronomical texts nor elsewhere does there ever appear an idea of a general proof demonstrable by arguments. There is never any theoretical statement, and no divergent opinion is ever recorded. Yet there must have been some discussion before this or that hypothesis or process was accepted as authoritative. A Mari text of the nineteenth century mentions sending a physician to examine some healing herbs. But the tradition of the scribal school hid from the uninitiated the controversies and adventures of learning. As far as the written sources go, science in our, that is in the Greek, sense did not exist in Mesopotamia or generally in the ancient Near East.

Similarly, literature was produced for some practical purpose. A poem about the rage of the god Era was used as a charm against pestilence. There are love songs of which the first lines sound as though they were written for a hit parade. "I'm crazy with love for you." Their frankness leaves nothing to imagination, for they belonged to a fertility rite and were written for the sacred marriage between the ruler and the life-giving goddess of love.

The greater part of the literary texts has come down to us on school tablets. The students copied classics to learn spelling and style. The adventures of King Gilgamesh of Uruk were read at the Hittite court as well as in Megiddo in Palestine. On the Nile and in Susa in Iran scribes copied the myth of Adapa-Oannes, the wisest of men, who had ascended into the heavens yet failed to attain immortality.

The role of Sumer in this school tradition is evidenced by the fact that almost all gods, heroes, and men of Akkadian classical literature are Sumerians. But how can we explain that the Sumerian heroic sagas concerned Gilgamesh and other kings of the first dynasty of Uruk, who were supposed to have lived in the twenty-eighth century, according to our reckoning?

Since we do not know the authors, places, and times of composition of all these works, we are unable to understand them in their historical contexts. The modern reader discovers the quest of immortality, or the tones

of wanton pride, in the epic of Gilgamesh, and compares him with Faust. Yet the earliest reference to Gilgamesh counts him among the gods. In a Sumerian myth, the goddess of love is a younger sister of her enemy, the goddess of death. Was there a streak of romanticism in the Sumerian soul? Does the juxtaposition of love and death express some eternal truth hidden in our unconscious?

The practical purpose of the scribal craft also explains why there was no writing of history in Mesopotamia. Rulers, dedicating objects to gods, referred to their deeds of piety, which included wars, as reasons for expecting divine blessing, but these ephemeral events were of no interest to posterity. When a king of Uruk, writing to the king of Babylon about 1800, mentioned the dispatch of Babylonian auxiliaries as something which had happened "two or three times" in the past, he did not quote the annals, but referred to conversations with his father and grandfather. What we have as Sumerian and Babylonian historiography are lists of kings which, in later compilations, briefly record some victories of old.

For Further Reading

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6 Egypt

Egypt was, as the Greeks said, the gift of the Nile. Like a gigantic snake (720 miles from the first cataract to the sea), the Nile slithers through the desert which isolates its green valley. Eastward the desert continues to the Red Sea and, beyond it, into Arabia; westward it passes into the Sahara. When, about 2000, an Egyptian force marching to the Red Sea had to cross some 90 miles of the desert, donkeys carried spare sandals for the soldiers walking on the burning sand. Southward, the cataracts prevented any large invasion until about 730 B.C.

Nobody before Napoleon succeeded in conquering Egypt from the Mediterranean. In Mesopotamia mountaineers from the east and the nomads west of the Euphrates could enter the sown lowland at will. The enemy could invade Egypt only over the narrow isthmus of Suez; this happened in the eighteenth and in the seventh and later centuries B.C.

Dates before 2500 are approximate to the nearest century, thereafter to the nearest quarter-century.

B.C.	3000	Egypt unified under a single pharaoh; beginning of the Old Kingdom, appearance of writing
	2700	Copper in common use in Egypt, pictures used in graves as part of funerary arrangements
	2600	Egyptian conquest of Nubia, the pyramids begun (IV dynasty); the potter's wheel in common use
	2130	Beginning of the Middle Kingdom (XI–XIV dynasties)
	1825	Egyptian influence dominant in Byblos
	1750–1550	Hyksos in Egypt (XV and XVI dynasties)
	1550–1200	The New Kingdom (XVIII–XIX dynasties); wheeled vehicles become common, as does the use of bronze and labor-saving devices (bellows for blacksmiths, the shadoof for watering gardens); chickens introduced
	1375–1358	The Amarna Age; Ikhnaton's religious reforms

The Nile valley is so narrow that from the banks of the Nile one can sometimes see the desert sands on right and left. Thus, though Egypt is as large as Texas and New Mexico together (386,000 square miles), 99 per cent of the population crowds some 13,000 square miles of the "black land" (as the Egyptians called their country) The rest is the tan desert.

Villages clustered along the margins of the cultivated land and during the annual inundation stood out of the water like islands in the sea, as the Greeks used to say. The prevailing wind facilitated navigation upstream, and the current carried the vessels northward. An energetic ruler could easily dominate the whole valley. Territorial unity was normal in Egypt and exceptional in Mesopotamia.

Last but not least, the twin rivers of Mesopotamia ended in the Persian Gulf, the backwater of history. The Nile poured its waters into the Mediterranean world of the future.

Swollen by the rains in Abyssinia, the Nile begins its rise in the middle of August in Cairo and attains its maximum height in the beginning of October. Thus, the inundation comes after the harvest and moistens the earth parched by the summer heat that kills weeds and aerates the ground.

(In Mesopotamia, the inundation comes in the spring; summer evaporation makes the ground saline and thus, in the end, unproductive.)

The brown water of the flood leaves behind a deposit of silt rich in organic matters which renews the topsoil. After the inundation the Egyptian needed no more than a wooden hoe to till the muddy ground capable of yielding two and three crops in the year. Greek authors spoke with envy of the farmers who without effort collected the bounty of the Nile.

In fact, it was the backbreaking work of the fellah which sustained the agricultural civilization of Egypt through six millennia. The sand blown in from the desert encroached upon the cultivable land. Dikes and canals which regulated the flood and extended its benefits across a wider area had to be built, and reconstructed after each inundation. At the dawn of history, the Egyptians already marked the height of the successive rises of the river. Even the Nile could default, and the seven lean years which Joseph predicted to his pharaoh could become dire reality. As soon as man's effort slackened, the population dwindled. It totaled 8 million under the Romans in the first century A.D.; it was only 2 million at the beginning of the nineteenth century, under Turkish rule.

The crowding of population in the irrigated land determined the nature of the evidence available to us. Since the Egyptians wrote on sheets made out of stalks of papyrus (our word "paper" comes from this Egyptian plant name), humidity and time destroyed their archives. The mud-brick buildings also disappeared, since the Egyptians did not use baked bricks. But graves built at the desert's edge remained. In the delta, however, the distance made desert burial impracticable. Hence, almost no evidence comes from the northern country, and our reconstructions of the Egyptian past must be unbalanced and unreliable. Moreover, the Egypt that we know is mainly an Egypt of the dead. The pyramids are tombs. To understand life in the ancient Egypt we have first to know the world of the dead.

The Egyptian hereafter was unique. In the Mesopotamian Hades pale shades ate bitter bread and drank foul water. The mighty hero Gilgamesh could only become the shadowy ruler of the lower world. Man's sole hope was to bribe the powers of Hades by sacrifices and gifts. In Egypt death led into an afterlife where the gods assigned to the deceased the due portion of water for the cultivation of his Elysian field. As long as the corpse, or at least a material image of it, subsisted, life continued. Hence, the careful burial in dry sand which preserved the corpse. Mummification was already known at the beginning of the third millennium. The abundance of funerary imagery in burial chambers served the same purpose. Palaces and shrines were built of sun-dried mud bricks, and the first Egyptian building of limestone was the pyramidal grave of a pharaoh. For the Egyptian, as an Egyptian formula says, the grave was "the eternal home." And it is the

"eternal home," its inscriptions, statues, reliefs, paintings, furniture, and so on, which tells us about the past of ancient Egypt.

Proverbial wisdom instructs us that only good words are to be said about the dead. The Egypt of the dead is peopled by well-fed men, and ladies who are young and good-looking. The pharaohs are benevolent, officials efficient, the lower classes busy and satisfied. Even the slave woman who grinds grain sometimes looks optimistic. The funerary texts give only isolated bits of evidence, and the historian must strive to elicit meaningful and correlated information from the eulogies.

The first agricultural settlements on high ground along the Nile and the Fayûm, probably established in the fifth millennium, reveal no surprises. The villagers cultivated barley of the Mesopotamian type, emmer, and flax. They raised livestock and used pottery, flint tools, and some copper articles. Life of the same kind continued in Nubia as late as the third millennium, but in Egypt two new powers appeared around 3000 which for the next 3,000 years determined the style of Egyptian life: the pharaoh and hieroglyphs.

In predynastic times pictorial representations of hunt and battle show warriors who are equal. Then, suddenly, representations appear in which a giant bestrides his own men and his adversaries, single-handedly destroying the enemy or digging a canal. He is the pharaoh, and his name is written alongside the picture in hieroglyphs. For instance, the images of fish and of chisel, read in Egyptian as *Nar-Mer*, give the name of a pharaoh. Yet, the impression that the hieroglyphs and the pharaoh emerge together may be erroneous, since the texts of the same period written on papyrus have disappeared and the prehistory of the Egyptian writing remains unknown. The hieroglyphic signs were and remained pictorial: a man leaning on a walking stick meant old age. Various supplementary signs made hieroglyphic writing capable of expressing any thought. Egyptian writing, like Hebrew and Arabic, did not indicate vowels, so we do not know exactly how the words were pronounced. Different scholars have had different theories and in accordance with these have inserted vowels in Egyptian names for the convenience of modern readers; thus it is not uncommon to find in different texts quite different spellings of the same name.

The first representations of the pharaohs show them wearing, now the white crown of the south, now the red crown of lower Egypt. It seems that the ruler of the south conquered the Delta. Thereafter there was in principle only one pharaoh. (This term comes to us through the Bible; it meant "palace" in Egyptian.) The history of Egypt became the story of the pharaohs. Its three millennia are divided among thirty dynasties, the last of which reigned between 378 and 342 B.C. The first two dynasties laid the foundation of the pharaonic civilization. The third settled in Memphis, near modern Cairo, immediately south of the delta, and here, about 2600, the

kings erected the pyramids. For the whole period of the "Old Kingdom," from the unification of Egypt to the last pharaoh of Memphis (Eighth Dynasty), the Egyptian king lists counted 955 years.

During this millennium the pharaohs reclaimed brackish lagoons in the Delta and papyrus swamps in upper Egypt, where the rich hunted aquatic birds. About 2600 a royal officer founded twelve villages in the Delta. Storehouses where grain was laid up for the use in lean years covered the land. Barley or emmer bread and beer from barley remained the basic foods ("Barley and beer" often meant any kind of salary.) Vegetables, particularly onions, supplemented the diet. Grapes and wine are first mentioned under the Second Dynasty (twenty-ninth to twenty-seventh centuries). Some 300 years later, under the Fourth Dynasty, there were five varieties of wine from the Delta, several sorts of beers, and some twenty bread products. A repast found in the grave of a noble lady of the Second Dynasty consisted of eight courses, from barley porridge to fresh fruits. Agricultural techniques remained simple. A wooden hoe was sufficient for the muddy ground and a small plot. From the Second Dynasty on, a light plow drawn by cattle aided the farmer. The houses were built of mud bricks, although those of the wealthy must have been quite comfortable. As early as the Second Dynasty, tombs were equipped with bathrooms for the next life of the owner.

Egypt abounded in excellent stone, from limestone, the building material of the pyramids, to porphyry and granite. In the first centuries of the third millennium the manufacture of heavy vessels made of hard stone was prodigious both in quantity and in workmanship. We still cannot understand how an Egyptian craftsman with his flint-pointed drill could hollow out rock crystal to make jars with sides as thin as paper. The use of stone for building was apparently more difficult. The tomb of the last pharaoh of the Second Dynasty was the first entirely lined with limestone. Stone vessels were for the wealthy, but the common use of the potter's wheel from about 2600 made pottery available to all. In the pit burials of the poor a clay cup for water and a dish for bread comforted the dead. The Egyptians imagined that the god Khnum fashioned men on a potter's wheel. Thus a technical device, invented within the historical period, could become the material for a myth.

The use of copper became more and more widespread during the third millennium. Toward the end of it the payments to workers, besides food and linen, often included copper utensils. From about 2750 copper tools, hardened by skillful hammering, facilitated large exploitation of quarries and the use of stone for building. Copper points for arrows were in use by 2100, and in a book written about 2000, the picture of a copper implement is a sign of an artisan.

However, flint tools and weapons, which could be easily and cheaply

replaced, continued to be employed well into the second millennium. Flint was a native material; copper had to be brought from faraway lands. For the same reason, bronze, which required tin as well as copper, was not used for weapons and tools before the sixteenth century, a millennium later than in Mesopotamia, though the alloy is stronger and easier to cast than copper.

It seems that the pharaohs intentionally isolated the valley of the Nile and endeavored to make its economy self-contained. Cultural influence of Mesopotamia and Syria-Palestine was tangible in the predynastic times and under the first pharaohs, about 3000. The Sumerian motif of entwined monsters appears on Narmer's palette. But when Egypt became powerful, the pharaohs preferred tribute to trade. Under military protection, the Egyptians exploited malachite and turquoise veins and, perhaps, copper mines in Sinai. About 2600, the pharaohs conquered Nubia to the south of the first cataract; near the second cataract they established foundries for working Nubian copper.

As a matter of fact, Egypt, the richest agricultural country of the world, could well dispense with foreign trade, which mostly brought in objects of luxury. When an Egyptian author described a time of calamities, he mentioned the lack of cedar wood from Byblos usually used for expensive coffins. When, in the beginning of the fifteenth century, Queen Hatshepsut sent a trade expedition to the land of "Punt" (probably the Somali coast), an event commemorated in the reliefs of her funerary temple, the main product brought back by her five ships was incense for temple service. She sent her vessels in order to eliminate the middleman and to bring living incense trees which were planted as "a Punt" in her capital. Elizabeth of England could not have been more mercantilistic in the sixteenth century A.D. The economic isolation of Egypt, where seagoing ships were constructed in the manner of papyrus skiffs on the Nile, was also expressed in her exchange system. In Punt as well as in a bazaar in Egypt, goods were disposed of by barter; for instance, beads were exchanged for onions or cakes. Yet, to quote Aristotle, how can one find the number of sandals equivalent to a meal? Therefore, as the philosopher says, the invention of money, a universal standard of value, was a work of justice and equality. The Egyptians did not invent money, but they used copper, grain, silver, and gold as common denominators of value. Yet, as late as about 1170 a sarcophagus valued at about 5 pounds of copper was purchased for about 2½ pounds of copper, 1 hog, 2 she-goats, and 2 sycamore trees. By contrast with Mesopotamia, the self-contained economy of Egypt remained primitive.

The pyramids express the self-confidence of self-centered Egypt. The Great Pyramid, built in the middle of the twenty-sixth century, covers more than 13 acres and remains one of the largest buildings in the world. For

almost 4,500 years it was also the tallest (over 480 feet). It was erected without machinery or scaffolding by the sweat of perhaps 100,000 workers and the ingenuity of Egyptian engineers who used levers and ropes. Men and cattle drew sledges up brick ramps to make a pile of some 2,300,000 limestone blocks weighing about two and a half tons each. The sides of the pyramid were oriented according to the four cardinal points, and the maximum error was about one-twelfth of a degree. Each side was to be 756 feet long at the base, and the maximum error was only a few inches.

Some 2,100 years later, Egyptian priests told Greek travelers that Cheops, the Pharaoh of the Great Pyramid, reduced the people to misery for his project. In fact, the annual working season for the building of the pyramids was presumably the late summer, when the Nile flooded and farming stopped. At that time the stones could be carried over water to the site of the pyramid. Since the mobilized peasants were paid in kind, the building of the pyramids was also a kind of relief work system. Modern man may ask whether the capital and labor expended in erecting the enormous funerary complex centered on the royal pyramid could not have been better devoted to low-cost housing. The same question, however, can be asked about Gothic cathedrals or the Temple of Jerusalem. The first need of any social system is to create incentives to make people do more work than that required by their immediate wants. As Adam Smith writes. "The desire of food is limited in every man by the narrow capacity of the stomach," but the desire for "conveniences and ornaments" is unlimited. When Smith wrote (1776), conspicuous consumption was, perhaps, the main lever of production. As he put it, with the greater part of the rich people the chief enjoyment of wealth consisted in the parade of riches. But Adam Smith wrote at the dawn of the Industrial Revolution. In earlier and poorer societies religion provided the incentive for works of economic supererogation; it raised common labor to the dignity of a ritual gesture. The Sumerian king is represented carrying on his head a basket with bricks for the foundation of a temple. When men of Lagash had to repair a canal, it was the canal of their god Ningirsu.

In Egypt, the pharaoh, a "great god" himself, linked mortal men to the eternal. He was represented on the temple walls worshiping the gods and associating with them, "the servants of the god" (priests, in our terms) were his delegates, and none of his subjects were ever pictured in association with a deity. The common people needed the pharaoh for eternal salvation, since the offerings without which the deceased could not exist were officially the pharaoh's gift: he alone had the key to the afterlife. His eternal life in the pyramid, thus, was directly related to the well-being of every Egyptian. Princes and courtiers were entombed around the royal pyramid, and images of their tenants and servants appeared on the walls of

these tombs, so that their names, too, were "established forever." Through this living chain of hope the humblest worker on the Great Pyramid participated in the sacrament of pharaonic immortality just as men who raised the Gothic cathedrals labored in the hope of the eternal reward for their pains

In due time the incarnate god became a corpse, and magic formulas were necessary to make the motionless body living in the hereafter. "This king Phiops dies not" Another set of charms was read by the mortuary priest in the tomb of a private man. A royal prince, in the twenty-fifth century, to ensure the continuance of oblations and liturgies after his death, endowed his tomb with twelve villages.

As early as the second quarter of the twenty-fourth century it became clear, however, that even a pharaoh could not be sure of perpetual repetitions of charms which had to be spoken daily to restore his body to life. The relevant texts began to be inscribed on the walls of his burial chamber so that, if necessary, the deceased himself would be able to speak the formulas of revivification.

In the middle of the twenty-third century these formulas began to be reproduced in the burial chambers of members of the royal family and of nobles who in this way usurped the unique privilege of the pharaoh. As one of the usurpers boasted: "I know every secret charm of the palace." By the end of the millennium anybody could copy this or that part of the royal liturgy in his tomb.

After his death, the pharaoh joined the immortal gods in the heavens. But since his subjects after their deaths continued to exist in the nether world, the deceased pharaoh became identified with Osiris, the king of the dead. Thus the same pharaoh, in the hereafter, was enthroned in heaven and was also "Osiris, Lord of the Lower World."

The pharaoh, being of divine essence, obtained eternal life as his right. His subjects had to prove that they deserved it. They needed the intercession of the pharaoh with the god Anubis, who led the dead into the other world. From about 2600, the titles and merits of the deceased were inscribed on the walls of his tomb. He did "what the pharaoh praised," whereas his "beloved wife" stated that she was held "in honor by her husband." In the course of time, these eulogies became more prolix. The deceased, for instance, said that he had taken swimming lessons with the royal children or had given bread to the hungry and clothing to the naked. The latter statement may to us sound like an expression of the idea of social justice. In fact, it only attests that the lord who speaks was wealthy and fulfilled his duty to his villagers, "so that I might become greater than the great ones."

It is more significant that, besides his own merits, the dead man needed

the sympathy of the living to ensure his existence in the hereafter. As early as the middle of the twenty-fourth century, in the parts of the tomb where the text would be accessible to visitors, there appears the appeal to those "who love life and hate death" to make an offering or, at least, to wish that the deceased might be blessed with "a thousand of bread and beer." In making this appeal to the passerby, the dead man naturally stresses that he did "what men love and gods praise." He also promises to intercede for his helper with the powers of the other world. In fact, despite the belief in the nether world, the tomb remained the "eternal home" of the dead. From the days of the pharaohs to the age of the Caesars perennial graveside dialogue took place between the living and the dead. In the twenty-second century a son wanted to be buried in the tomb of his father so that he might see him every day. In the same period the Egyptians began to deposit letters to the dead in their tombs. For instance, a widow asked her dead husband to rescue her and their baby from servitude to his relatives. In the thirteenth century a widower, who obviously could not overcome his grief, wrote to his dead wife complaining that she prevented his heart from being happy.

But in the realm of the shadows neither one's merits nor the assistance of the living could be as potent as the arts of magic. As we have mentioned, ordinary man usurped the charms composed originally to help the pharaoh. From the beginning of the second millennium every dead man affluent enough to obtain the advantages of mummification was identified with the ruler of Hades as "the Osiris So-and-So." The wooden coffins were inscribed with spells to help the defunct overcome the hazards of the journey to the other world. The felicity of the Osirean realm was now accessible to the common man. "I live, I die, I am Osiris . . . I grow up as grain . . . the earth has concealed me. I live, I die, I am barley, I do not pass away. . . ." We remember Paul's argument for the bodily resurrection. "That which thou sowest does not sprout again except it die" (I Cor. 15:36). In Egypt, and only in Egypt, the living, the dead, and the gods were three species of the same substance. Again, only in Egypt, a king, victim of his evil brother, not only became god after death, but by his death assured the personal immortality of his devotees. The same egalitarian idea later marked the Jewish, Christian, and Muslim hopes of future life. On the other hand, in the Levant outside Egypt, and also for the Greeks, death ended life, and immortality was a miraculous gift of the heavens to an exceptional man: "And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him" (Gen. 5:24).

The evolution of Egyptian ideas about the hereafter paralleled the changes in this world. Pictorial representations began to appear in the graves about 2700 as a part of the funerary apparatus, and the deceased was represented as receiving the offerings due to him. At this time, the

"great ones" were officers of the pharaoh, and the vizier was always a royal prince. By the middle of the third millennium, the vizier was a superbureaucrat heading several departments. By about 2300, local governors obtained the vizier's title so that they became equal to the chief of the central administration. Careers were opened to men of talent. One man who began as a "herdsman of cattle" and later served in 26 different offices died about 2350 as a director of royal works. Successful officials acquired wealth: about the middle of the twenty-sixth century one of them boasted that 2,500 asses were needed to carry away the sheaves of his fields. Rich and influential officials naturally desired to hand over their lucrative offices to their sons. Toward the end of the Old Kingdom a son regularly took the place of his father. Sometime later a governor boasted that he had been appointed to his office as an infant "of a cubit in height." The pharaoh was god, his high officials felt themselves demigods. By 2500 they were pictured in their tombs as masters of their estates, and on the walls of their graves they towered over the retainers and villagers. The noble whose ancestors had asked the favor of burial near the pharaoh and at the pharaoh's expense now built his tomb in his hereditary estate, "through love of the district where I was born." The noble now prided himself on furnishing water to his city and being beloved by "my entire city."

After Pepi II, who allegedly ruled ninety-four years and lived to be a hundred, a succession of short-lived pharaohs at Memphis lost control over the local viceroys. Of course, these kinglets soon became involved in wars one against another. At last, about 2130, the governor of Thebes prevailed over his rivals. His dynasty (the eleventh) and the two following reunified Egypt and kept law and order for some 400 years. We call this period the Middle Kingdom.

The task of the new pharaohs was not easy. Amenemhet I, the founder of the Twelfth Dynasty who about 2000 had overthrown the last king of the Eleventh Dynasty, was murdered, twenty-nine years later, in a palace conspiracy. The local governors continued to behave like monarchs. One of them in his tomb pictures his subjects, including priests and military, dragging his colossal statue (some 20 feet in height) to his mortuary temple. "Their hearts expanded when they saw the monuments of their lord."

The economy demanded more and more scribes, and the profession was open to talent. A man without a high-sounding title could send his son to the scribal school among the children of the "great ones." Toward the beginning of the second millennium, the scribes became a proud body. In tomb pictures of daily life of the Old Kingdom, the scribe is often represented as attending his lord, who is carried in a litter for inspection of his fields, but the paintings of the Middle Kingdom represent the scribes in the exercise of their service or as overseers of the workers in the field.

The founders of the Middle Kingdom preferred to be called not "mighty," but "benevolent" gods and, like simple mortals, chose names expressing personal piety. For instance the name Amenemhet put its bearer under the protection of Amun, the patron god of Thebes. The same pharaoh circulated propaganda tracts representing himself as the savior of Egypt predicted by a seer of old. The praise of Sesostri I was fittingly attributed to a political refugee who had foolishly run abroad at the accession of this benevolent ruler.

The officialdom of scribes was the mainstay of the unity of Two Lands. As in Mesopotamia, every governmental transaction was recorded in writing. Scribes accompanied marching soldiers, scribes counted crops, scribes recorded monthly inspections of sacred utensils in every temple and registered wicks made of old rags used for work inside royal tombs. The higher officials untiringly admonished the lower scribes to work with utmost zeal. Thus, in the third quarter of the fifteenth century an order was dispatched to an official with the stern warning: "You shall not slack, for I know that you are sluggish." The letter was found 3,200 years later, still unopened.

In the Old Kingdom, the scribe was often a son of a noble, even of a pharaoh, and received his education from the father and a tutor. Professional requirements compelled even a highborn youth to start at the bottom of the bureaucratic ladder. The aristocratic architect who built the pyramid of Pepi I (about 2300) began his career by carrying his "scribe's palette," helping with measuring rod, and so on, until he became Royal Builder. Consequently he knew how to deal with the workmen: "I never went to bed angry against anybody."

It is noteworthy that a man who was a master of propaganda for Sesostri I also wrote a book warning the students of writing schools that all manual occupations were demeaning. The scribe alone never lacked sustenance from the pharaoh; he alone was always an important official. "Nothing surpasses scrolls." No wonder that this scroll was copied without end in scribal schools. The new government appealed to the professional pride of the imperial bureaucracy. But this propaganda activity also attests a new understanding of the power of the pen. As a scribe of the twenty-second century wrote, "speech was mightier than any fighting." Sesostri I could, perhaps, believe he had been chosen as pharaoh by the sun-god when still unborn, but he knew and said that only the king whose name is remembered on account of his work does not die.

In the eyes of the scribe the social pyramid was a part of the world order. As soon as man comes from his mother's womb he runs to his master. The scribal idea was one of conformity to this natural principle. A good man listens to his superior; he is neither a talebearer against his colleagues nor deceitful toward the Palace. He must be a paragon whom

everyone would wish to be like, yet not be overbearing. He makes "Egypt work with bowed head" for the pharaoh, but should not misuse his power. In this world view the washerman who refused to carry the laundry and the female slave who talked back to her mistress appear as symptoms of the revolution and become figures of the Egyptian apocalypse. Yet, when the officials in their funerary inscriptions stress their sinlessness: "I did not rob the poor," "I have not taken away a man's daughter, nor his land, either," they suggest that their colleagues were more rapacious. No independent evidence about the behavior of the officials of the Middle Kingdom has come to light as yet. But toward the end of the twelfth century, a scribe freed a tomb robber for a bribe. The gang repaid the loss to its unlucky member and continued its operations undisturbed.

Our perspective of the Middle Kingdom may, however, be distorted, since we lack material comparable to that of the Old Kingdom. Posterity regarded the language of the Middle Kingdom as classic. When it became fashionable to place scrolls in coffins as a kind of spiritual viaticum, classics accompanied the dead, and in this way, and also in school copies, some writings of the Middle Kingdom have come down to us. On the other hand, from Old Kingdom literature, the later scribes appreciated and copied only advice given to the budding bureaucrats. Thus, some views expressed by the authors of the Twelfth Dynasty may have been taken from older books now lost, and, therefore, may have been less startling to their contemporaries than they are to us.

It seems that the new feature of the Middle Kingdom was rather its emphatic style. The kings and their generals not only boasted of victories, but swore that their reports were true. A king erected his statue in the conquered Nubia to mark the new boundary. He says that the statue was made in order that "you might prosper because of it, and fight for it." The statues are often colossal, more than 50 feet in height, but the faces are grim and sad. We can even see the bags under the eyes. To please his patrons, the artist stressed the fatigue and worry of the pharaoh, worn down by his responsibilities. The sculptors of the Old Kingdom, no less masters of their craft, were more reserved. They, and their pharaohs, knew much more of kings and kingship than they chose to express.

Nothing succeeds like success. Toward the middle of the nineteenth century the pharaohs could suppress the "great chiefs," and the whole land was now administered direct from the palace. The pharaohs extended their power up to and beyond the second cataract. Egyptian influence was consolidated in southern Syria; in the last decades of the nineteenth century the rulers of Byblos used hieroglyphs and Egyptian titles.

The affluence of the river lands, in Egypt as in Mesopotamia, attracted the hungry dwellers of the deserts bordering the stream. A document of the

nineteenth century mentions some Bedouin offering "to serve the pharaoh" since "the desert was dying of hunger." The Egyptian border post in Nubia turned them back. No unauthorized Nubian was permitted to go downstream, when Nubians came down for trade, they were sent back the next morning to the place whence they had come. A system of fortresses with ditches, ramparts, and the bastions, from which the archers could shoot arrows from three different directions, controlled the southern entrance to Egypt.

A more or less similar control was exercised at the Isthmus of Suez. But the bedouin from Palestine were not excluded from Egypt. When the famine was sore in his land, Abraham went down to sojourn in Egypt. Egyptian texts about 2000, and again in the thirteenth century, state that Asiatic herdsmen "as a favor" were permitted to enter Egypt, "to keep them and their cattle alive."

After the middle of the eighteenth century, the "wretched Asiatics" somehow succeeded in conquering lower Egypt. Following Egyptian tradition we call these invaders Hyksos, that is, "rulers of foreign land." In the same period, before or after the Hyksos, native princes seized control of the territories south of Elephantine. In upper Egypt power was seized by local magnates. At last, toward the middle of the sixteenth century, the princes of Thebes undertook a patriotic war against the Hyksos and their Egyptian allies who "had forsaken Egypt their mistress." The Hyksos were driven out, Nubia was reconquered, and Thebes again became the capital of a united Egypt. The "New Kingdom" began.

The New Kingdom (about 1550–1200) was a period of military expansion, that is, of enrichment. War was, until the Industrial Revolution, the fastest and the most direct way of capital accumulation. Booty and, afterward, the tribute of conquered lands stimulated the economy. The skill of captured and enslaved craftsmen sustained the economic growth. That the pharaohs extended the boundaries of Egypt in accordance with the command of gods was not surprising. The pharaoh Sesostri I, in the twentieth century, said of the sun-god of Heliopolis: "He makes himself rich when he makes me conquer. The great hall of the Karnak temple, a forest of 144 stone shafts, each 50 feet high, cool on the hottest day, the two colossi of reddish sandstone, each 70 feet high, the treasury of the tomb of Tutankhamen, or the mighty obelisks of Thutmose III that now stand in Istanbul, Rome, London, and New York, thus fulfilling his hope that his name might endure forever and ever—all these wonders were paid for with the plunder of Nubia and Syria. The simplest soldiers profited from a successful campaign. They were "drunk and anointed with oil every day as at a feast in Egypt."

We do not know how much of the new wealth percolated to the nameless toilers of Egypt who had no means to erect tombs. But documents show that the bastinado and the shout of the taskmaster, "The rod is in my hand, be not idle!" were only a part of the real life. For instance an official reported about 1230 that three peasants of a royal domain ran away after having been beaten by the manager, and now there were none to till the royal land. The workmen at the royal tombs lived in pleasant two-room houses which were gaily decorated (dancing girls, protective spirits), and at least some of them read the perennial classics. They received decent salaries in kind, had a lunch break, three days of rest monthly, plus many days off on the occasions of festivals: they rejoiced until sunset at the accession of a new pharaoh. Disputes among them were settled by judges from their village. They even went on strike, "because of hunger and thirst" when rations were in arrears. And they had their own burial chambers in the mountain near their village. But they were a privileged, hereditary group.

Yet these glimpses of real life are rare. Equally rare is evidence about technical advances during the New Kingdom: the yoke resting on the necks of the cattle (it was previously lashed to the horns), wheeled cars, shadoofs for watering gardens, bellows for blacksmiths, the introduction of a new breed of rams and also of the chicken, "a bird that gives birth every day," and so on. Our sources, the eulogies of the dead and the self-praises of the pharaohs, speak to posterity and hence are not directly concerned with the routine of life.

For the same reason we know little about the meanings of changes which suddenly become visible. Experience taught the Egyptians that even pyramids cannot protect the corpse; therefore—many concluded—let us eat, drink, and be merry. But why did a scribe of the New Kingdom, like Horace and Horace's imitators in later ages, proclaim that literary works outlive the pyramids? In the sixteenth century Egyptian scribes began to visit ancient monuments as sightseers. One scribbled on a wall: "I have visited the pyramid of Zoser. It is beautiful." Why was he so much concerned about the present? Again, we can understand that affluence brings self-indulgence. Women in diaphanous dresses and unclad dancing girls people the decorations of the tombs in the fourteenth century. Yet in the no less affluent thirteenth century scantily clothed girls disappear from the walls—in one reused tomb such figures were repainted to show them decently dressed—and funerary subjects replaced the optimistic scenes of eternal happiness. The deceased now was not enjoying a festival in his garden, but praying prostrated under a palm.

How are we to understand the strangest figure of Egyptian history, the pharaoh Ikhnaton, who about 1370 undertook to reform the religion of

Egypt? After his death, some fifteen years later, his memory was damned, his residence city, which we call Amarna, about 160 miles south of modern Cairo, abandoned, and the old faith restored. The artificialities of Amarna art, which appeal to modern taste, and the anachronistic interpretation of Ikhnaton as a forerunner of Jesus, have made the name of this deformed and sullen pharaoh well known. He is described as the first monotheist. In fact, he proclaimed the solar disk as his own deity. Ikhnaton means: "Serviceable to the sun disk." He addresses the disk as, "Thou sole god, like to whom there is none other." In the language of polytheism this would mean that the god in question was the preferred one, but Ikhnaton worshiped no other god. The essential novelty of his theology was the doctrine that he alone knew the god and was its sole image on the earth. In private houses as well as in the tombs at Amarna sculptured icons expressed the new "Doctrine of Life": Ikhnaton and his family prayed to the sun. Its rays blessed them. His subjects prayed to him. The reform was not monotheistic but egocentric, only its intolerance was monotheistic. Throughout Egypt the names of the other gods were obliterated. According to Egyptian belief the destruction of the name destroyed the person. We need not wonder why Egypt did not revolt. The army remained faithful to the legitimate pharaoh.

The natural path of Egyptian expansion lay up the Nile. Between 1550 and 1450 the pharaohs of the New Kingdom, following in steps of their predecessors, colonized and Egyptianized the gold-producing land of Nubia, advancing the frontier to the fourth cataract. The savages to the south could not endanger the pharaonic forces. Despite some setbacks, Egypt held the greater part of Nubia securely almost to the end of the second millennium, and when the southern province finally became independent its rulers remained the devoted protégés of Amon-Re of Thebes.

For Further Reading

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7 The New Levant

Syria and Palestine differed greatly from Egypt, although the Egyptian influence was here recognizable as early as 2700. Cities like Byblos and Ugarit were older than Memphis and on a level with Thebes as centers of civilization. Ugarit (modern Ras Shamra) on the Syrian coast opposite the easternmost cape of Cyprus controlled more than 80 towns and villages lying in a territory of about 40 square miles. The city could equip 150 seagoing ships for a trading expedition. Seven languages, from Cypriote to Sumerian, and five scripts occur in Ugaritic documents of the thirteenth century. In Egypt legal thinking was so undeveloped that the status of fellahs remains unclear to us, but the jurists of Ugarit distinguished between the service to be rendered to the king by an official owing to his rank, and his duties as a grantee of royal land. The Ugaritic language, akin to Hebrew, and the texts written in this language illustrate a civilization closely akin to that of Canaan (Palestine) on the eve of the Hebrew settlement. The mythological tales of Ugarit narrate deeds of Baal and other gods whom the Hebrews rejected. On the other hand, Ugaritic documents mention names and details that also appear in Biblical narratives, for instance, Abraham, or the adoption of a grandson by the grandfather, a legal act also performed by Jacob with regard to Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. 48·5).

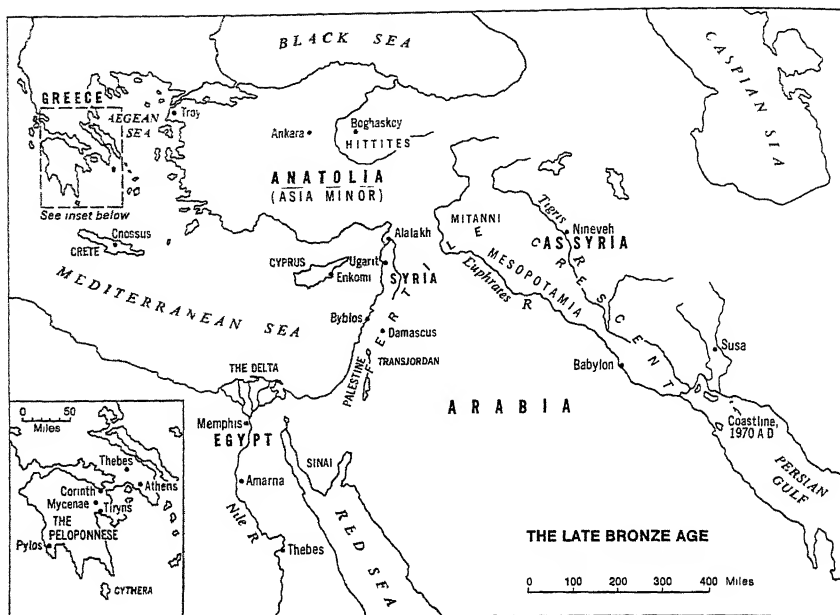
Thus, by contrast to Nubia, Syria remained to a considerable degree culturally independent of Egypt and rather indebted to Babylon. Even in the days of Egyptian supremacy the chieftains of Syria salaaming before the pharaoh ("Seven and seven times I fall at the feet of my lord") did so in the Babylonian language. During the New Kingdom, the worship of Syrian gods became popular in Egypt. The pharaoh Ramses II named his favorite daughter "Daughter of Anat" after the Semitic goddess of war also worshiped in Ugarit.

The pharaoh Thutmose I, about 1525, announced by anticipation that his empire extended from the third cataract of the Nile to the "inverted water" of the Euphrates, which unlike the Nile, runs from north to south. Afterward he actually reached the Euphrates. Two of his successors in the fifteenth century repeated the same feat. Well into the thirteenth century the pharaohs dreamed of the Euphrates frontier, and in the meantime tried to control as much of Syria as they could.

The conquest of Syria and her wealth began in earnest when the pharaohs mastered the instrument that made this task realizable: the horse.

Dates are approximate to the nearest decade

- B C.
- 1550 Hyksos expelled from Egypt; new model Egyptian army using chariotry and composite bows
 - 1525 Thutmose I claims Syria to the Euphrates; consequent war with Mitanni intermittent until 1410
 - 1500 Invention of alphabetic writing in Syria
 - 1400 The palaces of Crete destroyed; Mycenaean Greeks dominant in the eastern Mediterranean
 - 1375–1350 The Amarna Age, Ikhnaton's religious reforms, Egypt paralyzed by internal problems; Hittite expansion destroys Mitanni
 - 1300 Egyptian revival; wars with the Hittites for Syria
 - 1270 Peace between Ramses II and the Hittites
 - 1230 Egypt invaded by the "sea peoples"; Troy destroyed by the Mycenaeans
 - 1200 Iron begins to come into common use; the palace of Pylos burned, beginning of the breakup of Mycenaean power
 - 1190 The Philistines (one of the "sea peoples") settle along the Palestinian coast
 - 1100 Egypt loses Nubia; camels in common use in north Arabia, use of lime plaster to make watertight cisterns opens dry areas for settlement



Horses were known in Mesopotamia as early as the twenty-first century: a Sumerian king proudly compared himself with a swift horse. In the eighteenth century, on the upper Euphrates and in Asia Minor, the horse was already harnessed to vehicles. But a longer time was needed for adapting the horse to the needs of warfare. The animal was really a pony, about 50 inches in height. Moreover, these horses were not gelded—a mare in heat let loose could stampede a whole camp. Hence until the thirteenth century horses were rarely used for riding. But two ponies harnessed to a light wooden chariot could transport a driver and a rider, who shot arrows from a composite bow that had an effective range of more than 600 feet. For the first time men possessed a highly mobile missile force which could destroy the enemy swiftly and definitively. The pharaohs now boasted of their knowledge of horseflesh and prowess in archery and other sports, while pictures in tombs represented the owners transported in horse-drawn vehicles to their estates.

The new weapon was very expensive. A horse cost as much as several slaves. Fine materials and perfect craftsmanship were necessary for making chariots and composite bows. A pharaoh tried 300 bows before selecting his own (which nobody but he could bend, just as no other man could draw the bow of Odysseus). Thus, only rich and industrially advanced states could afford chariotry.

Unfortunately for the pharaohs of the New Kingdom, the sight of their

chariots on the Euphrates was bound to provoke rich and mighty powers into making war against Egypt. Here again, to use Napoleon's maxim, geography explains history. An impassable desert separated Syria from Mesopotamia, except for the narrow green belt where the Euphrates approached the Mediterranean coast. This same northernmost part of Syria offered the best passage between Asia Minor and the lands to the south. The copper of Cyprus reached the continent through the ports in the same region. As long as the pharaohs remained roughly below the line Byblos-Damascus, they did not threaten the security of the powers outside Syria. The Egyptian control of the hub of communication lines in northern Syria hurt the cities of this region and the interests of such powers as the Mitanni beyond the upper Euphrates and the Hittites in Asia Minor. These potential adversaries also had chariots and archers. A poet of Ugarit described the invention of the composite bow and how the goddess of war killed the inventor in order to appropriate the weapon. At Ugarit not only the crew of a chariot but sometimes the horses were clad in mail. The Hittite kings used chariotry as early as about 1700, and their chariots in the fourteenth century held a crew of three. The pharaoh and his rivals in Syria fought with the same weapons, and no victory was ever final.

The struggle for Syria continued for almost the whole third quarter of the second millennium. Between the campaigns, the courts entertained amicable relations and the rulers on the Euphrates and in Asia Minor exchanged gifts and letters with the pharaohs. The king of Babylon, when he fell sick, expected to receive condolences from the pharaoh, and the statue of the goddess Ishtar traveled from Nineveh to Thebes to help an ailing pharaoh. The Asiatic kings sent their daughters with fitting retinues (for instance 317 girl servants) into the pharaoh's harem. But a king of Babylon was curtly rebuked for asking for an Egyptian princess in exchange. (He then begged the pharaoh to send him any good-looking Egyptian girl with a big dowry: who would dare to say she was not a princess?) Marriages were part of the bartering system, a form of international trade. And international trade, like domestic, was not above bazaar tricks and bargaining. A king of Mitanni discovered that statues of gold sent to him from Egypt were of gilded wood.

These transactions, the diplomatic correspondence, and the intermittent wars created the interdependence of the lands of the Levant. It was the first international age for the Near East. The courts from Susa to Thebes corresponded in the same Babylonian language, and from the Black Sea to Nubia chariotry dominated the military art. The use of this weapon required professional soldiers, and the new military technology changed the social structure. In Asia Minor and Syria the chariot warriors received fiefs in return for military service. In some Syrian cities they formed a kind of nobility, membership in which was conferred by the ruler. One of these

feudal lords of Ugarit possessed 2,000 horses. Even in Egypt the military, enriched by the wars, came into the forefront of the society. The pharaohs now affected uniform. When the Eighteenth Dynasty became extinct, three generals in succession ascended the throne, and the last of them founded the Nineteenth Dynasty. One of these crowned generals stated that he equipped the temples of Egypt with priests chosen from the pick of the army. In other words, the military appropriated the choicest morsels of the Egyptian economy.

The other phenomenon of the new Levant was the emergence of a new great power. The troops fighting the Egyptian armies in the fourteenth century were directed from a faraway capital near the Black Sea, and when the peace came, it was inaugurated by the marriage between a pharaoh and a Hittite princess from Asia Minor.

The Hittite capital was Hattushash, modern Bogazköy, some 110 miles east of Ankara, the capital of Turkey. Thousands of clay tablets inscribed in cuneiform characters from the royal archives were found here. The grammatical structure of the Hittite language relates it to the Indo-European group, but the vocabulary is mainly that of the non-Indo-European indigenous peoples of Anatolia. The Indo-European invaders had completely forgotten their ancestral gods, and the civilization of the Hittites was essentially derived from Mesopotamia.

From their capital the Hittite kings with varying success extended their supremacy over a great part of Asia Minor. They preferred indirect domination. a conquered country or city became a vassal of the Hittites. About the middle of the fourteenth century, having destroyed the kingdom of Mitanni in northern Mesopotamia, they took over its Syrian dependencies and its role in the struggle with Egypt. About 1270 the struggle ended in stalemate. Ramses II made peace with the Hittites, who preserved their sphere of influence in northern Syria.

Ramses II was the last imperial ruler of Egypt. His fame reached Greek tradition and, through it, English poetry. He is the Ozymandias of Shelley. He fathered 162 children during his reign of 67 years, raised the most colossal of colossi (his statue at Abu Simbel is about 66 feet high), and covered the walls of his enormous temples with vainglorious pictures and inscriptions. "Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!" Today the tourists view his legless statue, 34 feet long, lying in the sand near Cairo, and stare at his mummy in the Cairo Museum. "Nothing beside remains."

Unknown to Ramses II and his Hittite rival, movements and inventions of little men were soon to end the might of the Hittites and to make the splendor of Egypt obsolete. About 1230, five years after Ramses' death, the "sea peoples" began to descend on Egypt. For some fifty years the pharaohs had to fight off the migratory waves by sea and by land. We do not know who these peoples were or whence they came. They swept away

the Hittite empire and destroyed the cities of Syria and Palestine (which received this name from the Philistines, one of the "sea peoples" who settled there). Egypt survived but lost her empire in Asia.

Then, about 1100, the pharaohs lost Nubia, and for some four centuries Egypt, torn by internal dissensions, did not count in world politics. Blessed by the Nile, Egypt could afford to stand still while camel, lime plaster, iron, and alphabet changed the mentality of men and the equilibrium of political forces in Asia. By the end of the twelfth century men had trained camels to work for them, and camel caravans crossing the sand wastes changed the whole life of the countries around the Arabian desert. About the same time men learned to store rain water in cisterns lined with the new waterproof lime plaster. Much arid land now became habitable.

Iron, if fortified with carbon, is stronger than bronze, but its smelting demands special knowledge and it has to be shaped by hammer at red heat. The knowledge was probably first acquired about 2500 in Asia Minor, but for some unknown reason did not become common in the Levant before about 1200. By the tenth century, iron plow tips made tilling of heavy soil possible in Palestine. The main advantage of iron, however, was the universal distribution of iron ore, which is 500 times more common than copper in the earth. Even a small, low-grade iron deposit in the neighborhood was sufficient to free a city or a tribe from dependence on distant sources of copper, tin, and lead.

The creation of the alphabet was the most important advance in the transmission of knowledge between the invention of writing and the art of printing. After 1500, scribes in Syria, trying to invent a script fit for their Semitic dialects, hit on the device of a consonant alphabet. Hieroglyphs reproduced words; the cuneiform script was syllabic. But the inventors of the alphabet used signs to represent the ultimate particles, the "elements," as Augustine says, of writing, the single sounds on which syllables and words are built. In Ugarit an alphabet of 31 characters was already in use about 1400, and the scribes arranged the signs in essentially the same ABC order as the letters of our alphabet. About the same time there appeared the first predecessors of the Phoenician alphabet from which, via Greece and Rome, our alphabet has descended. The knowledge of hundreds of signs was necessary for both the hieroglyphic and the cuneiform script; this limited literacy to trained professionals. No great effort was needed to memorize two or three dozen alphabetic characters; now anyone could learn to read and write. The alphabet is democratic.

Our survey of the Bronze Age has centered on the Levant, particularly Egypt and Babylonia, two main sources of civilization. Now we must sketch the role of the Aegean region, the future Greek world, which in the Bronze Age was the outer province of the Levantine civilization.

Cyprus lies only 43 miles from Asia Minor and 76 from Syria. The north wind, as Homer says, carried a sailing ship from Crete to Egypt in five days, and chains of small islands linked Crete with Asia Minor and the mainland of Greece. As early as about 6000 the art of farming reached Cyprus and Greece, half a millennium later came pottery making. Corinth and Athens were settled before Babylon and Memphis. The Stone Age settlements in Greece and in the Aegean Islands lay mostly on or near the eastern coast, and Greece always turned eastward. Yet, for a long time, the Aegean peoples remained behind the advance in the Levant. Copper appeared in the Greek world only in the first, and bronze only in the last, centuries of the third millennium. But toward the end of the same millennium, the whole Aegean region became involved in the Levantine economy. Texts from Mari mention copper from Cyprus and imports from Crete. In the beginning of the sixteenth century, pupils in Egyptian scribal schools learned Cretan names. In the middle of the second millennium, inscribed cylinder seals from Babylonia reached Thebes in Greece. The architecture and the frescoes of Cretan palaces imitated the arts of the Levant.

These palace complexes appear in Crete about 2000 and some centuries later in Greece, where, until about 1400, the Cretan taste prevailed alike in feminine fashions and the form of shields. The unity of civilization in the future Greek region is striking in religion: there were no temples; the deities, foremost of whom was a great goddess, were worshiped in open-air places or in house chapels and caves. Yet, in several respects the "Minoans," as we name the inhabitants of Crete after their legendary king Minos, and the "Mycenaeans," as the inhabitants of Greece are called after Mycenae, the city of Homeric Agamemnon, were two different nations. The physical ideal of the Minoans was a lithe and slender person. The golden life-size masks of the Mycenaean rulers show large and bearded faces. The Cretan palaces were originally protected by bastions, but soon the fortifications disappeared, and the Cretan art shows society life, acrobats, and the beauty of nature, from bull to octopus. The Mycenaeans liked to represent battle scenes and hunting, and many of their palaces were built as parts of enormous fortifications which, like the acropolis of a Greek city, served as a refuge in time of war. Crowned by a relief of two heraldic lions protecting a column, a sign of the palace, the gate of the acropolis of Mycenae is the earliest historical relic of Europe: Agamemnon—if there was an Agamemnon—passed through this gate to make war on Troy. Cretan rulers were mummified in Egyptian manner, but built no pyramids. The enormous royal tombs of the Mycenaeans—the so-called Treasury of Atreus in Mycenae has a dome 43 feet high and 46 feet wide—were unknown in Crete.

A profusion of gold and silver objects found in these tombs, and the

splendor of the palaces discovered in Crete and at Pylos, at the Bay of Navarino in the Peloponnese, evidence the wealth of the Aegean rulers in the second millennium. Some of this wealth percolated down to their subjects. Houses in the Cretan village were even furnished with clay pipes for sewage. But we do not know how this wealth was procured. Neither Greece nor Crete had natural riches. It seems that in the second millennium Greece and Crete formed a bridge for traffic between Europe and the Levant. The same neck rings were used from Syria to Scandinavia. Amber beads from the Baltic Sea reached Greece via the Adriatic. Fourteenth-century faience beads, originally fabricated in Egypt, but probably imitated and certainly traded by the Mycenaeans, have been found as far afield as England and Georgia, in Transcaucasia. An Egyptian list compiled about 1400 mentions Knossus, Cythera, an island between Crete and the Peloponnese, and Nauplia, the ancient port for Mycenae. It is hardly by chance that Knossus, the greatest Cretan settlement, faced Greece.

The Aegean peoples were also craftsmen. An industrial city, Alasia, protected by a stone wall, flourished in copper-rich Cyprus (at modern Enkomi) in the second half of the second millennium. A ship wrecked off the southern coast of Turkey in the thirteenth century carried ingots and metal implements from Cyprus.

In the fifteenth century, the Mycenaeans, for unknown reasons, got the upper hand. In Egyptian texts the term referring to the Cretans disappeared. Between roughly 1400 and 1250 Mycenaean pottery was popular from Italy to the Turkish coast, and potters in Crete and Cyprus imitated the new mode. Passed from one tribe to another, Mycenaean objects reached England and southern Russia.

From this "all-Mycenaean" period we have texts which we can understand. Writing appeared in Crete as early as the beginning of the second millennium, and the earliest signs are already simplifications of pictograms. Neither this writing nor that used in Cyprus has been deciphered as yet. But Michael Ventris (1922–1956), an English amateur, decoded the syllabic script of some 90 signs which was used in Greece and in Crete (Knossus) in the fourteenth to thirteenth centuries. The deciphered language was pre-Homeric Greek. Except for some words incised on seals and vases we know this language only from inscribed clay tablets that were preserved because they became baked in conflagrations. The unbaked tablets as well as any texts written on perishable materials (papyrus, leather, wood?) have disappeared without a trace.

About two-thirds of the signs we read are proper names, among them the names of gods, which are Greek: Zeus, Poseidon, "the Mistress Athena," and so on. The rest of the words are mostly names of objects and crafts. We learn what we knew already or could surmise: the Mycenaeans had chariots and smiths. The interpretation of terms referring to social

relations, for instance to landholding, remains tentative. Yet the tablets show the working of a bureaucratic apparatus similar to that of Sumer. Again tablets were "filed" and labeled according to the content, and the condition of every chariot wheel in the stores was recorded.

Clay tablets inscribed with signs similar to the earliest Sumerian script also have been found in Rumania. The use of clay tablets indicates a Mesopotamian model. Yet, the Cretan-Mycenaean script owes nothing to the cuneiform. It does not fit the Greek language either, and for this reason the meaning of many words remains unknown or doubtful. The script was probably borrowed from some people of Asia Minor. The tablets show that in the second half of the second millennium the Mycenaeans spoke Greek. We cannot know, however, in absence of earlier texts, how old was the use of Greek in the Aegean world.

Empires and civilizations are short-lived. Prosperous and apparently secure about 1300, the Mycenaean world disintegrated before 1100. The palace of Pylos was burned about 1200, but the palace of Tiryns near Mycenae existed well into the twelfth century, and the citadel of Mycenae may have burned only toward the end of that century. The acropolis of Athens continued to be inhabited without interruption. Numerous sites were abandoned or lost their former importance, but other cities often rose in the neighborhood. Argos inherited Mycenae, Alasia (modern Enkomi) in Cyprus, a center of bronze industry, which declined in the eleventh century, perhaps because of the silting of her harbor. Her role was immediately taken over by the neighboring Salamis. When Salamis was destroyed by earthquakes in A.D. 332 and 342, it was rebuilt as Constantia, when Constantia was destroyed by the Arabs in A.D. 647, the city was succeeded by Arsinoë, the medieval and modern Famagusta, two miles off. It is true, however, that no palaces of the post-Mycenaean period, or other evidence of wealth, have yet been found in the Aegean region. For three or four centuries our evidence is essentially limited to pottery shards. When the "Dark Age" ends, in the eighth century, the Aegean region is Greek, and only the sagas of Agamemnon, of Nestor, and of the "Homeric" heroes preserve for the Greeks the memory of the proto-Greeks who built the palaces of Mycenae and Pylos.

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8 Gods and Men

The preceding survey would have disappointed a Babylonian or an Egyptian scribe and, probably, a Mycenaean Greek. They would have said that it ignored the real causality of events: the gods. When the supreme god is angry with a land, says a late Egyptian sage, he exalts its humble people and humbles its mighty people. If the city of Ur was destroyed by barbarian invaders about 2000, it happened because Enlil, "the lord of all lands," sent the "evil storm" against the city. The gods sometimes acted arbitrarily, but generally they rewarded piety and punished evildoers. Men believed in the premise, without which no society can endure, that godly men prosper; and godliness was equated with piety. Therefore, an illness or a defeat was a punishment for sin. The loser had offended the gods. When the glorious dynasty of Sargon was overthrown by the barbarians the meaning of the catastrophe was obvious to Babylonian scribes: Enlil, the deity of Nippur, had punished the land because Naram-Sin, a king of Sargon's line, had sacked Nippur. Encircled by the enemy, Ramses II appealed to Amon, his divine father. "Has a father forgotten his son? Have I ever disobeyed your command? Have I not filled your temple with my booty? Can Amon care for the wretched Asiatics who do not know him. . . ." And Amon saved the pharaoh. "Worship your god daily . . . sacrifice prolongs life, and prayer expiates guilt."

This conception mirrors the reign of justice within any organized human society. The universe of Nature was confused and hostile. The alternation of seasons and the rhythm of stars were unrelated to man's deserts. Social life alone was orderly and, therefore, predictable. Man did not learn the idea of Law from Nature, but imposed it on the forces of Nature and the gods who governed these forces. Man was not yet interested in any causality that he was unable to influence. A weak link in the chain of beings, terrorized by lion and wolf, snake and scorpion, he regarded beasts as his peers and rivals. The rate of mortality was such that in the twenty-first century at Ur a tenth of the adults in a work gang died during one year, and a third of the children of a slave group died within a year. Man needed knowledge of the past to enable him to face the future with courage and intelligence. King Naram-Sin allegedly described one of his wars in order to teach future rulers not to become pusillanimous in the face of a barbarian invasion.

Happily for the godly man, the gods would indicate his future in

dreams, but also by oracles, prophecies, and signs. Thus, in Babylonia, history was the servant of prognostication. From the twenty-fourth century on, the scribes collected and transmitted omens. For instance, the lungs of a victim sacrificed by King Ibbi-Sin of Ur, about 2000, exhibited a certain deformation. Afterward, the land rose against the king. A new occurrence of the same sign would foretell the same kind of trouble. There were also other kinds of omens which were derived from behavior of animals, from dreams, and so on. The idea that gods "write" their message on the liver and other organs of a sacrificed animal was an Akkadian concept which later, via scribal schools, reached Greece and Italy.

Enlil was the god of storm and Amon the sun-god. A god was a doer, who did this or that. As nature and mentality were essentially the same from the Indus to the Nile, the same functions were attributed to gods who bore different names according to the fantasies of their worshippers. The Hittites named the storm god Teshub, Arinna was their solar goddess, and so on. This does not mean that the pagans worshiped the phenomena of nature. Only the would-be reformers were so simple as to believe, as Ikhnaton did, that the sun disk itself was divine or, as Plato taught, that the stars were visible gods. The anthropomorphic personification, to use our own language, made the driver responsible for the good and evil that his car—the sun or storm—might do. By thus understanding the phenomena in anthropomorphic terms men tried to deal with what they could not control. From our point of view it is ridiculous to say that Amon saved Ramses II in the battle at Kadesh. But our historical explanations are too often no less metaphoric. For instance modern scholars say that after 1200, the "dynamic power" of Egyptian civilization was dead. The only advantage of such circumlocutions is that they mean nothing and for this reason do not prevent further search whereas the reference to Amon makes the explanation final.

A Greek philosopher as early as the sixth century B.C. observed that if cattle and horses could pray they would imagine their gods as cattle and horses respectively. And Aristotle noted that men imagined not only the forms of the gods but their ways of life to be like our own. The earthly cities of men became the models for the heavenly city of the gods, who were thought of as superkings. According to the Babylonian belief men were created to free the gods from work. Thus, the service of the gods was imposed on mankind. Like a king, a god lived in his palace, "the house of the god," which we inexactly call a "temple." Like the royal palace, the house of a god was not accessible to a common man. "The servants of the god," whom we call "priests," fed, clothed, amused, and otherwise took care of their masters. It was easy to understand the behavior of deities. A Hittite instruction for temple officials puts the doctrine neatly: "Are the minds of men and of the gods different? No. If a servant stands before his

master he must be clean, and when the master has eaten and drunk, he is relaxed and kind. But if the servant is negligent, the master will punish him and his kin. Likewise, if a man angers a god, the god will destroy him, his kin, his cattle and crops. Hence, be very reverent as to the words of a god . . .” Accordingly, we can understand that when men became so numerous that the noise they made prevented the gods from sleeping, the gods sent a flood to destroy mankind. On the other hand, when Era, god of pestilence, ravaged the land, making no distinction between good and evil men, he was stopped at last by other gods, because, without their subjects, whence would the gods get their food offerings?

The anthropomorphic view of the divine world united the religious thought of the ancient Near East. Consequently its theological material exhibits one overall pattern.

Prayer is the link between the worshiper and the deity. Addressed to a superior being, the prayer praises the god in question and flatters him: he is the greatest of gods, nay, the only (true) god. Thus, he can and, therefore, must help the worshiper. The petitioner's claim may be supported by the reference to the state of the worshiper. “O Amon, give ear to one who is alone in the law court, who is poor. . . . May it be found that the poor man is vindicated. May the poor man surpass the rich,” prays an Egyptian of the thirteenth century. About 1300, a Hittite queen prayed to the sun-goddess, the divine protector of her land: “Among men there is a saying: ‘To a woman in travail the god yields her wish.’” Since the queen is (soon to be) in travail, the sun-goddess must grant life to her sick husband. Ramses IV petitioned the god Osiris to grant him high Nile floods so that he might make offerings to the gods and preserve his country. Osiris made the people and cannot abandon them. A god must help because he is father and king of his people; he cleanses sin, comforts the afflicted, and punishes evildoers. In short, he is both feared and loved. Thus, the workers on the royal tombs at Thebes prayed to Amon the “beloved god who listens to humble requests”, they knew that “though the servant was disposed to evil, yet the Lord [Amon] was disposed to be merciful.”

Like a king, the god would punish men who offended him and would reward those who did what he wanted. Men placated him by sacrifices and gifts, but also by their righteousness. Although arbitrary and often immoral rulers, the gods, like earthly kings, insisted on the observance of law and order by their subjects. The rules of morality being virtually the same in the whole Levant, the list of sins was the same in all religions: taking the life or wife of another, false accusation, not giving water to one who asked for it, and so on. Except for the prohibition of the worship of other gods and the interdiction of idolatry, the Ten Commandments had been repeat-

edly prescribed in teaching—and broken in practice—ages before Moses. And several centuries before Jesus a Babylonian sage wrote down the rule: "Recompense with good the man who wrongs you."

The more the gods became a sort of interlocked directorate, the more an individual believer needed a personal and exclusive god to whom he paid constant devotion and from whom he expected personal attention. In twenty-first-century Lagash, children were named after the goddess Bau three times more often than after her august husband Ningirsu. The Babylonian often carried a seal showing him introduced to a high god by some lower deity, a kind of personal angel. King Adadnirari of Assyria (810-782) proclaimed: "Trust Nabu, do not trust another god."

In this way, what we call personal piety was born. The mother of Nabonidus, the last Babylonian king (556-539), was a devotee of Sin and three other gods of the city of Haran. From her childhood she sought after them. When Sin was angry with his city and went off to heaven, so that Haran was destroyed, she laid hold on the hem of his robe. Day and night she prayed for his return, she fasted, wore a torn dress, and praised Sin. After fifty-four years of desolation, Nabonidus, her son, restored the temple of Sin. Now, at the age of ninety-five, she prayed to Sin for her son: Let him not offend thee.

The essential unity of theological thinking made the unification of the pantheon possible and necessary. As early as about 2300, in Sumerian Lagash all local gods were considered members of the family or staff (musician, architect, and so on) of the principal god Ningirsu. Gods of different cities were similarly coordinated. In the age of the pyramids the theologians of Memphis declared that Atum, the principal god of Heliopolis, was heart and tongue, that is intellect and will, of their own Ptah. The same tendency operated on the international level. Arinna was not only "the mistress of the Hatti lands," but also "the queen of all the countries." "In the Hatti country thou bearest the name of the Sun-goddess Arinna, but in the land which thou madest the cedar land, thou bearest the name Hebat." At least the main deities became international. In the middle of the twelfth century, according to an Egyptian report, the prince of Byblos recognized that the Egyptian Amon provided for all lands. As early as about 2000, worshipers were called upon to proclaim the greatness of this or that god everywhere. When Ramses II appealed to Amon for help he exclaimed: "What will man say if even a little thing befall him who bends himself to your advice?" The gods had to pay a decent respect to the opinion of mankind.

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Asian Civilization

9 Early India

India has always been an immensely heterogeneous land of provincial fastnesses, linguistic and racial diversity, torn by conflict and invasions. Its people have had little opportunity until recent times to develop a pervasive sense of historical continuity or of national awareness, and much of ancient Indian history is still shrouded in mystery. However, during the past century immense strides have been taken in archaeological research. The remains of large cities, monuments and inscriptions, and other artifacts of great antiquity have been unearthed. Together with the earliest religious literature they provide the basis for a relatively coherent reconstruction of ancient Indian civilization despite the lack of conventional historical materials. What emerges before us is an extraordinarily rich panorama of cultural achievements.

Paleolithic man roamed the Indian subcontinent, and there is scattered evidence of prehistoric agricultural settlements in the northwest; but the first great civilization to flourish there developed along the rich alluvial banks of the Indus River and its tributaries in the third and second millennia B.C. At Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro are the remains of two large and expertly constructed cities which were the focal points of an archaic culture extending for 1,000 miles along the Indus Valley. Thus far excavations have failed to reveal any surviving literature apart from brief undecipherable inscriptions on emblematic seals. However, the uniformity of the architecture and artifacts suggests the existence of a centralized state comparable to Egyptian and Mesopotamian civilization.

At Mohenjo-Daro the city was planned around a central citadel and constructed mainly of good-quality burned brick. Spacious main streets divided the municipal area into large blocks with smaller lanes serving the residential sections. The houses varied in size from rows of small cottages to larger dwellings of two and three stories with roomy interiors and bath-

Prehistoric Era

- B.C. c. 3000–1500 Indus Valley civilization
 c. 1500–1200 Aryan invasions and earliest hymns of the Rig-Veda

Vedic Era

- B.C. c. 1200–900 Composition of the Rig-Veda
 c. 900–500 Later Vedas, Brahmanas, and early Upanishads

Rise of Jainism and Buddhism

- B.C. c. 550 Birth of Mahavira and Gautama
 c. 322–185 Mauryan dynasty
 c. 273–237 Asoka
 c. 185–100 The Shunga and Kanva dynasties, the Laws of Manu

Period of Invasions

- B.C. c. 90 Earliest Saka invasions
 A.D. c. 25 Kushan invasions
 c. 78–101 Kanishka
 c. 100–300 Rise of Mahayana Buddhism
 c. 300–800 Pallava rule in south India

Gupta Era

- A.D. c. 320–335 Chandragupta I
 c. 335–376 Samudragupta
 c. 376–415 Chandragupta II
 c. 454–500 Hun invasions
 c. 540 End of Gupta dynasty

rooms. The elaborate municipal drainage system was without parallel in the ancient world until Roman times. While the architecture was relatively austere, there is ample evidence that the inhabitants generally enjoyed the comforts and facilities of a flourishing metropolis. The remains of fine jewelry, domestic articles of carved ivory, silver, copper, and bronze, and earthenware of good quality indicate that arts and crafts were highly developed. The larger temple-like structures—including pillared halls and a great bath 180 by 108 feet in size—suggest the presence of a well-established priesthood. Many of the engravings and artifacts reflected cultic practices common to all the great archaic civilizations—worship of the Mother Goddess, sacred animals, and related symbols. But the detailed features of the culture remain obscure. Equally enigmatic is its influence on later Indian civilization. Speculations abound, but reconstruction is substantially impossible at present, and it therefore remains one of the most challenging areas of Indian archaeological research.

The decline and demise of Harappa culture has been ascribed to a number of causes, such as the unusually massive inundations of the Indus and its tributaries which undermined the agricultural economy. The death blow probably came during the second millennium B.C. at the hands of the invading Aryan tribes from the northwest. The Aryans (“noble ones”) were part of a larger Indo-European migration which left a common cultural heritage from Greece through Iran into India. The religious and social institutions of these invaders are reflected in the oldest stratum of the Veda (sacred “knowledge”)—the most revered sector of traditional Hindu religious literature. The tribes were led by an aggressive warrior aristocracy mounted on horse-drawn chariots, and armed with copper and bronze weapons of good quality. Judging by the relatively inferior weapons discovered at Mohenjo-Daro, the defenders of the indigenous civilization were at a serious disadvantage. Furthermore, their food supply was dependent on a complex and vulnerable system of irrigation. By contrast the invaders were mobile. Their economy was based primarily on seminomadic techniques—cows and other animals that could move with the tribe—and they took what they needed from the lands they conquered.

Aryan tribal solidarity was based primarily on clan kinship standards, and there are indications of a functional stratification of warriors, priests, artisans, and slaves, which appears to be a structural precursor of the classical Indian “caste” system. The tribes were rigidly patriarchal and patrilinear, governed by an oligarchy of warriors or hereditary monarch, with tribal alliances formed chiefly for purposes of warfare and mutual protection.

Our knowledge of Aryan culture is derived primarily from the Samhita (“collection”) of the Rig-Veda (“veda of hymns”). It was put into final

form at a relatively late date, but reflects the core of a very archaic tradition. The hymns were preserved by priestly specialists, the Brahmanas—a name derived from their principal function—to offer sacrificial prayer (Brahman) to the gods. They are strikingly varied—descriptive myths, invocations, and extended liturgies—but all present a coherent world view outlining the origin of the cosmos, the gods, man and society, and forming the center of a cult designed both to mediate between man and the gods and to cope with everyday needs.

The Aryans worshiped a well-defined pantheon of exalted and powerful deities, for the most part personifying natural phenomena—the sky and earth, rain, storm and lightning. The myths associated with the principal gods are sacred paradigms which in their ritual configurations provided the basis of tribal solidarity. They reveal the values, norms, and goals of the culture. The ideals of the warrior aristocracy are perhaps most forcefully outlined in the hymns associated with the storm god Indra. Equally important are Varuna—the god of justice—and Agni—the god of the sacrificial fire. All these hymns show that Vedic man took a positive view of the world around him; he was confident of his ability to grapple with his environment. His religious “anxiety” was outer-directed: there is very little evidence of the inward ascetic withdrawal and transcendental mysticism of later Indian civilization. The imagery is filled with an exuberant, this-worldly optimism. Life after death embodied the perfections of the phenomenal world.

The religious practices outlined in the second division of the Veda—the Brahmanas—represent a culmination of the worldly goals of the archaic cult. These great prose treatises are scholastic elaborations of the rituals necessary for proper performance of the sacrifice, and they evidence the emergence of a vast magical technocracy designed to manipulate both the external world and the gods themselves. In the hymns of the Rig-Veda, the high gods appear to be redolent with monumental dignity and active wills of their own, but in the Brahmanas the priest “compels” the gods to function as agents in a magical system over which he alone has control. The priests are “higher than the gods.”

The growth of priestly power and status in Aryan society was an important element in the extension of Aryan political power. It is possible to trace, through geographical reference in the Veda, the slow but sure march of Aryan civilization from the Indus Valley down the western portion of the Ganges and its tributaries. One of the most striking examples of the religious means through which Aryan political power was advanced is to be seen in the greatest of all Vedic sacrifices—the *ashvamedha* (“horse sacrifice”). This rite was normally celebrated by a king who wished to dramatize important military conquests. One of its principal goals was to

educate the populace in the values of Aryan society, in the new lines of authority, and the expectations of the elite. The sacrifice took a year to perform. It entailed the slaughter of hundreds of animals and the continual support of a large priestly staff. The king's retinue toured the countryside with the sacred horse designated for the final sacrifice. They marked out the boundaries of his territory, stilling local resistance and promulgating Aryan values by force and propaganda. The performance of this elaborate ritual presupposes a differentiated political and religious system with substantial economic resources derived not only from the expropriation of local produce and man power, but from settlement into fixed locations and systematic agriculture.

With the diffusion of Aryan culture during the ancient period came the development of caste as the basic principle of social stratification. The importance of the caste system in traditional Indian society can scarcely be exaggerated. It is difficult for Western observers to understand how a system of social organization so clearly in violation of their conceptions of "justice," "natural rights," and "fair play" could have become so fundamental a part of a great civilization. Social distinctions based on hereditary background, occupation, and economic status are, of course, nearly universal, but in India they reached a degree of institutionalization in law, custom, and religion unique in world history. The early Buddhist and Jain literature makes it clear that caste was a prevalent (if not the only) theory of society in northern India during the sixth century B.C., but its development is difficult to trace. It is probable that as the Aryan invaders battled their way down from the northwest through the Ganges Valley, they conquered and enslaved local peoples most of whom were darker and smaller than their Aryan foes. The most archaic word for slave is *dasa* (dark), and the classical word for caste is *varna* (color). This principle became the basis for a further development into four traditional *varnas*, but with the real point of distinction based on occupation: *brahman* (priest), the *kshatriya* (warrior), the *vaishya* (merchant), and the *shudra* (cultivator). However, specific hereditary status is more commonly represented by the word *jati* (birth) and related terms which signify membership in a particular local caste, clan, and family. In the past there have been as many as 3,000 castes (*jatis*) numbered.

Caste distinctions were hedged about with many barriers and taboos based on primitive notions of magical pollution which prohibited all but the most limited social contacts. In the classical form of the system only the three highest *varnas* were regarded as true Aryans and admitted to the full Vedic rites, initiation, and education. The *shudras* were for the most part excluded, but they remained an organic part of the society, tied to the land they cultivated or serving the higher castes. Beyond the pale of Aryan

society were the debased "outcastes" and "untouchables," usually restricted to menial and ritually unclean tasks. Outcasting (permanent exclusion from Aryan society) was usually invoked for serious violations of caste taboos, and was used to reinforce the hereditary character of the system.

One of the most remarkable features of this system is that it did not impede extensive racial and cultural assimilation. Color distinctions as a real principle of discrimination were undercut, though they did not disappear completely. Much of the later orthodox literature is infused with cultic practices assimilated from the indigenous environment. Intermarriage became permissible, providing the woman married up (hypergamy) and within Aryan society. The caste system often transcended narrower tribal provincialisms and kinship ties, and created an environment in which a vastly diverse range of social forms could be brought under a relatively coherent system of mutual expectations and support.

Caste was diffused by the incorporation of many indigenous groups, with local leaders receiving suitable status and privileges. Part of the effectiveness of the system resulted from its self-regulating character. Each village and caste had its own council of elders who supervised and enforced the appropriate laws and customs. It was always an embarrassment for the community if caste violation became public knowledge, or if coercion from outside had to be invoked.

One of the most remarkable aspects of the system lies in the fact that it was a specifically religious institution. Conformity to caste was far more than an expedient mode of social organization and personal behavior. It was a religious obligation, and a form of personal piety. The specifically religious sanction appears first in the charismatic power of the Vedic sacrifice reinforcing Aryan solidarity and the hereditary rights of the priesthood and warrior elite; second, in the myths which elevate caste institutions to the status of essential sacred forms created by divine fiat. Later, as we shall see, the caste system was further reinforced by the theory of transmigration and ethical retribution. In all cases caste was held to be rooted in the eternal order of the universe, and it dealt with some of the most perplexing human enigmas—those with which Job was confronted. Why is there so much inequity, suffering, and misfortune in the world? It answered that all individuals are assigned their lot in life in accordance with a sacred order of fixed obligations and circumstances, and that each individual has at least the satisfaction of knowing his precise location in the universal order of things.

The caste system was immensely wasteful of human resources and seems repressive by modern standards. But given the sprawling social complexity of the Indian subcontinent and an economy of scarcity often ap-

proaching the famine level, the caste system long served as a relatively coherent solution to India's massive problems of social organization. However, caste did not go unopposed in the ancient period. It was only one of several theories of society.

In the latter half of the first millennium B.C. India seems to emerge abruptly into the light of history. The literature of the period contains much that is of historical value. Among other things, it reflects the struggle for control between the leaders of Aryan society and a new religious elite imbued with the teaching of the Buddha and of Mahavira—the founder of Jainism.

These developments in India were part of a larger pattern of social and cultural revolution throughout the civilized world from Greece to China. Provincial institutions and values were collapsing under the pressure of more complex forms of economic and political organization associated with new urban developments and imperial expansion, all driving toward wider social inclusiveness. In India during this period there was a rising urban economy with the earmarks of capitalistic affluence. But these advances were offset by massive power struggles between newly emerging states for control of territory and economic resources. The era was one of great brutality which involved the uprooting and extirpation of political minorities.

These hardships intensified earlier speculations about the great religious questions: the meaning of the self and the world, the origin and order of the universe. By the sixth century B.C., there were many new religious and philosophical schools which, despite doctrinal differences, sought new and more exalted spiritual answers to these perplexing issues. This is particularly clear in the last section of the Veda, the Upanishads, which presents a new religious theory in contrast with the older system of sacrificial and magical ritualism. The basic human problem in the Upanishads is one of personal salvation from bondage to the material world. The meaning of all external worldly forms is called sharply into question, and a new metaphysic asserts that the essential self, the soul (atman) of each individual, has its origin in a transcendent spiritual principle (Brahman); but it undergoes an endless cycle (samsara) of phenomenal rebirths, suffering, and death. It assumes a new physical form and status in each successive life depending on the ethical quality of actions (karma) in the preceding life. The law of karma means that for every thought and act there is an inevitable, retributive consequence—for better or for worse. Overt acts of hostility or aggression which harm other sentient creatures are particularly destructive, as are the inner impulses and ignorance which lead to these acts. Yet, the individual can ultimately attain spiritual release (moksha)

from this cyclical round by practicing the yoga—an autonomous, inward self-discipline of mind and body designed to eliminate the sources of human error and evil. Ultimate salvation not only means final release, but the experience of eternal transcendence and bliss beyond all worldly finitude.

This new metaphysic was shared, in its rudiments, by most of the major religions which emerged during this formative period in India, but there were important differences between the Brahmanic version embodied in the Veda and those espoused by the non-Brahmanic schools—most important Buddhism and Jainism. From the Brahmanic perspective, the yoga and all other means of salvation were tied to priestly hereditary rights and authority. The Upanishads were part of the esoteric Vedic lore, dominantly restricted to the Aryan elite. The theory of karmic retribution was used to reinforce the caste system by making obedience to caste rules a precondition of salvation or at least improved birth status in the next life. By contrast, both Buddhism and Jainism rejected the religious authority of the Veda and the esoteric restrictions imposed on the new teaching. Their messages of salvation were preached openly without regard for caste. Personal conversion was the principal criterion for membership in monastic orders, and their communities included lay followers recruited from upwardly mobile urban commercial groups who held that religious and social standing should be based on proven abilities—not just on hereditary rights.

According to tradition both the Buddha and Mahavira, the founders of Buddhism and Jainism respectively, were from non-Aryan tribal clans. In their social teaching—particularly in Buddhism—anticaste criticism abounds:

No Brahman is such by birth.
No outcaste is such by birth.
An outcaste is such by his deeds.
A Brahman is such by his deeds.

Reconstruction of the Buddha's teachings as they were originally articulated in the sixth century B.C. entails difficult critical problems. However, the major forms of classical tradition represent him as teaching a theory of salvation that followed the so-called middle path—a mean between bodily self-mortification and self-indulgence. He emphasized a yoga at once exoteric and practical. The relative practicality of the doctrine is suggested by its basic axioms—the "four noble truths": 1. human existence is *dukkha*—an agonized bondage to the endless cycle of rebirths; 2. the cause of this agony is ignorance (*avidya*) of the illusory nature of phenomenal existence and also the desire (*tanha*) for it, which then inexorably and repeatedly forms the soul and chains it to the rebirth process; 3. the

elimination of ignorance and desire will break the sequence and so precipitate final salvation—attainment of Nirvana, 4. the proper method is the “eightfold path,” a combination of ethics (sila) and meditation (samadhi) which together lead to the attainment of wisdom (panna) and enlightenment (bodhi), and final salvation.

Mahavira promulgated a yoga which placed more emphasis on physical asceticism. Like the Buddha, he stressed the monastic ideal—the need to give up all worldly commitments for full-time concentration on the yoga. However, in both cases monastic requirements for the laity were considerably modified, and lay ethics stressed adherence to economically efficient virtues and contractual relationships relevant to the urban commercial environment.

Monastic asceticism was in no sense nihilistic. It sought new and more fruitful meaning in life by putting the finite and disrupted forms of the everyday world in perspective. It established a new and loftier framework of religious meaning, a more universal ethic, with remarkable potentials for social reconstruction

The new political leaders of India during this period saw in Buddhism and Jainism valuable tools for support of the state. After provincial areas had been overwhelmed by force the universal ethics and pacifist teaching could help cement social solidarity. These potentialities were partially realized in the fourth and third centuries B.C. with the emergence of the Mauryan state—a centralized bureaucratic empire. The third Mauryan king—Asoka, whose rule began about 270 B.C.—was converted to Buddhism after his conquest of the subcontinent, and he promulgated a new ideology inscribed on stones and pillars throughout the empire. This ideology, through which Asoka hoped to unify his empire, was comprised of universal norms drawn chiefly from the Buddhist lay ethic—but also common to the other salvation religions. It tried to do away with persisting expensive and wasteful sacrifices. It bypassed caste criteria for social stratification, and it outlined economically efficient virtues which might also be expected to facilitate political integration.

However, Asoka's ideology appears to have been a thin veneer superimposed on the vastly confused and intractable Indian environment. After his death the empire was split into a number of parts. Both barbarians and Greeks invaded the northwest, and new dynasties dominated the Ganges Valley and the Deccan in the south.

It is at this point in Indian history that the Brahmanic core of early Indian culture begins to emerge as the dominant and finally the primary source of legitimate authority. In 185 B.C. the last Mauryan king was assassinated by his chief general, Pushyamitra, founder of the Shunga dy-

nasty, who claimed Brahmanic descent. It is probable that the Shungas used the Laws of Manu (c. 200 B.C.)—the most authoritative of the ancient lawbooks—as the principal basis for social reorganization. In addition to the rules governing caste and other social institutions, the Laws of Manu offered a comprehensive theory of human action embodied in basic axioms central to orthodox Hinduism. The first axiom is represented by the “four goals”: religious duty (dharma), wealth (artha), sensual satisfaction (kama), and final salvation (moksha). The second axiom is represented by the “four stages” which mark out the ideal development of individual human life from birth to death, centering particularly on the need to learn and uphold the law: the student, the householder, the ascetic, and the sage. These axioms represent an organic whole which endeavors to bring all phases of human existence under the discipline of Brahmanic values.

The dynastic and political confusions of this era obscure the growing Brahmanic solidarity. In the first century B.C. the Shungas were overwhelmed by the Satavahana empire; but the first Satavahana emperor celebrated the occasion with the horse sacrifice and depended on Brahmanic legitimation. The Satavahanas sponsored a richly diverse program in the arts and letters, as did their successors, the Pallavas. The Tamil states on the southern peninsula rose to a new power in the second century B.C. and later produced a magnificent literature of their own.

Though Buddhism slowly lost ground during this period in politics and social theory, many dynasties and feudatories retained Buddhist religious commitments. Buddhist art evolved into a highly refined expressive technique, reflected first in the ecclesiastical edifices (stupas and chaityas) at Bharhut, Sanchi, and Bodhi-Gaya, and later in the sculpture of the Mathura and Gandhara schools. Of immense importance for the subsequent history of Buddhism in Asia was the doctrinal transformation of the early teaching which culminated in the development of Mahayana and later of Tantric Buddhism. The Mahayana (“great vehicle”) emerges recognizably in the first century A.D. In the place of the older conservative ideal of the perfected monk practicing the yoga in isolation, it introduced the notion of the Bodhisattva (“being of enlightenment”) who sacrifices his personal salvation in order to help other creatures by acts of love and compassion. Any person, not monks alone, might become a Bodhisattva, which accounts in part for the strong social grounding of Mahayana, and its missionary power. The Bodhisattva concept provided an important source for new forms of popular religion entailing the worship of heavenly Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. And at the same time Mahayana philosophy attracted many intellectuals to the Buddhist community.

The reinforcement of Buddhist tradition during this period was partly due to the influx of foreign invaders, first the Greeks—most notably under

the Buddhist king Menander, and later the Sakas (Scythians), Pahlavas (Parthians), and Kushans. In the first and second centuries A.D. the Saka-Pahlava kings ruled an empire in the northwest which extended to the Deccan. A number of these kings converted to Buddhism, in part because they were at first regarded by the Brahmanic elite as barbarians—the equivalent of outcastes and worse. The greatest of these rulers was the Kushan king Kanishka I (c. A.D. 80), who apparently provided a favorable environment for the development of Mahayana theistic and philosophical literature.

These events in Buddhist religious life were accompanied by important developments in Hindu theism. While worship of the Vedic gods persisted, other deities of indigenous origin attracted followers. New names appeared in a bewildering variety and were incorporated in the later theistic literature as part of the Hindu pantheon. They were brought into the Brahmanic world view and placed under the authority of the Veda and its social values. The emergence of traditional Hinduism—with its profuse range of non-Vedic theistic symbolism and magical ritual—represents the adjustment of Aryan and early Brahmanic values to the archaic Indian environment. Nevertheless, the pristine authority of the Veda prevailed. The indigenous deities are usually represented as incarnations of the Vedic gods. These include the deities of other heterodox traditions—even the Buddha himself.

The fusion of Vedic and indigenous theologies in new settings can be seen in Hindu temple art—immensely rich in visual symbolism yet in one aesthetic framework. The most important cults during the early period were those devoted to the lesser Vedic gods Shiva and Vishnu. Both were popularized through extensive missionary activity, as is suggested by conversions to Shiva of rulers who must have found in Brahmanic values the means for strengthening their authority and stabilizing the social order.

One of the best examples of growing Brahmanic control over the immensely complex religious and social environment is to be found in the epic literature—the *Mahabharata* and *Ramayana*. These two massive encyclopedias of Hinduism inculcated orthodox values and institutions through the medium of epic drama. The most important text in the *Mahabharata* is the Bhagavad-Gita, written probably in the first century A.D. The Gita fuses into one superb whole many divergent strands of speculative philosophy, cultic theism, and worldly social theory. Its principal social message is that the supreme religious obligation of every man is to perform the duties of his own caste.

The power of the Sakas and Satavahanas was broken in the fourth century A.D. by the emergence of a new political power—the Gupta empire. This was an event of great importance for Indian civilization, one which

probably more than any other consolidated Brahmanic orthodoxy and enriched Hindu culture. In A.D. 320 Chandragupta I ascended the throne. He undertook with all deliberateness to conquer the whole of the subcontinent—not only for personal dynastic aggrandizement, but to destroy barbarian power and to restore and bring to new fruition the sacred values of Aryan culture.

The social goals of the Guptas are reflected in epigraphs which speak of the struggle to “settle the castes and orders and to confine them to their duties.” But this was not their only purpose. The arts and sciences reached new heights, and standards of courtly perfection were set which endured for centuries. The greatest of the Gupta rulers—Samudragupta (c. 335–376) was a man who could celebrate the pretentious horse sacrifice to dramatize his status as “Supreme King of Great Kings,” yet also play the lute and compose poetry for the entertainment of his court. He surrounded himself with the finest artists, scholars, and scientists of his time. Allowing for exaggeration of the king’s virtues by court chroniclers, it seems clear that Samudragupta and the Gupta leaders as a whole succeeded for a time in bringing political stability and new cultural unity to the troubled land.

At the height of its power, the Gupta empire dominated the subcontinent in a fashion not seen since the days of Asoka, and the search for cultural stability and social integration is reflected in a number of areas. The diverse (and hence unstable) philosophical environment of the earlier centuries was brought under the aegis of Brahmanic authority in the form of the six “orthodox” systems. Though each school was richly differentiated—ranging from ritualistic sacrificial theory to abstruse problems of logic—they all affirmed as a first epistemological principle the authority of Vedic tradition.

The drama, poetry, and musical theory of the era show a concern both for lyric beauty and for moral values. The poet and dramatist Kālidāsa (c. A.D. 400) glorified the ideal king “who punished only to maintain order and married only for the sake of progeny; and for whom material gain and pleasure were based on religious law.” Even Vatsyayana, author of the *Kamasutra*, a treatise on the art of sensual love, insisted that his book was “in perfect accordance with the Holy Scriptures,” and that in sexual matters one must “act in accordance with religious law . . . and not impulsively.”

In general it is clear that all means—religious and philosophical—were enlisted to support the social order. So fortified, the Gupta empire probably could have survived indefinitely had it not been for the incursions of a new and ferocious foreign invader—already active in Europe and the Middle East—the Huns. By the end of the fifth century in India Hun suzerainty was spreading rapidly. Despite temporary revivals the empire was steadily torn apart. By the end of the sixth century the dynasty had been destroyed

as a real political entity. Although some of its trappings were retained—Gupta coins were later imitated and the Gupta name adopted to lend dignity and legitimation to lesser kings—the achievements of the Gupta period, a culminating point in ancient Indian history, persisted at a deeper level, and remained a principal reservoir of India's cultural life into the medieval period and beyond.

For Further Reading

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10 Early China

The Chinese are a historically minded people, and have assiduously collected and edited their documents for more than two millennia. In spite of this, the history of China is imperfectly known. While the general outline is clear enough, a careful analysis period by period has barely begun. This is partly because of the enormous amount of source materials, and partly because Chinese historiography poses peculiar problems which are only gradually being understood. Careful research will bring out new facts, and many generalizations will be in need of review. Chinese history is therefore in a state of flux, but for the same reason is one of the most exciting fields of modern historical research.

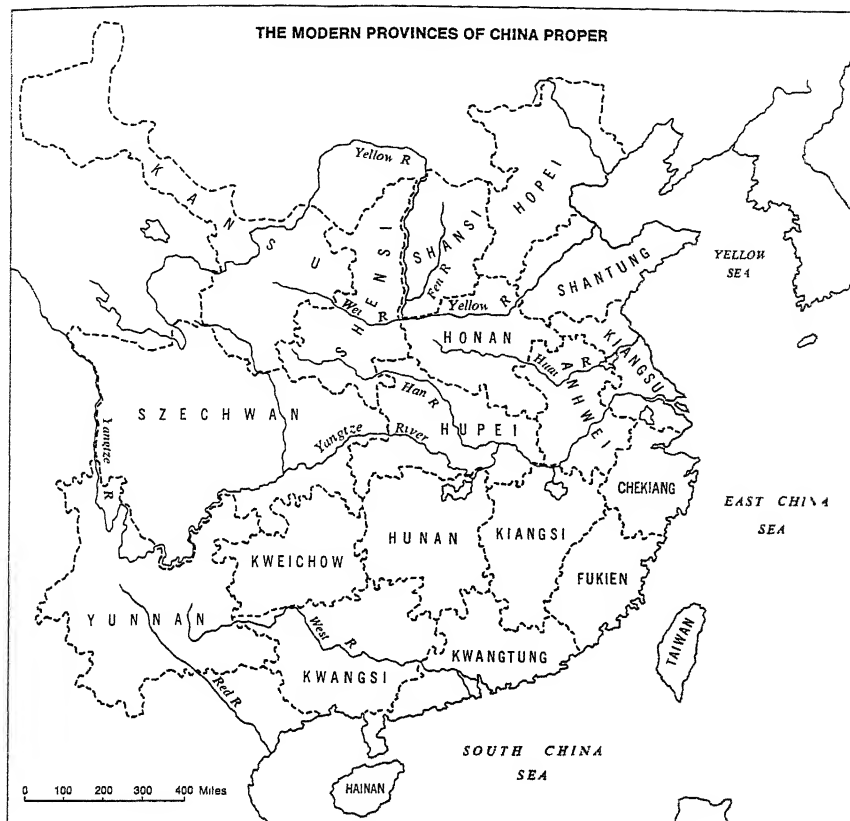
While the civilization of China evolved and survived throughout a longer span of time than that of any other nation in the world, it is not remarkable for its antiquity and does not unfold as early as the great cultures of the Middle East. It is only from the latter half of the second millennium B.C. that China started to take form as a social unit. These relatively late beginnings tempted some scholars in the past to seek the original home of the Chinese in Egypt or Babylon, in Central or Southeast Asia. They tried to derive the Chinese system of writing from cuneiform and even from the Hebrew alphabet. Discoveries since the 1920's have changed all this. It is clear now that the Chinese have inhabited their land since prehistoric times, and that, in spite of influences from abroad, their civilization has developed indigenously.

Primitive man lived in China as far back as the Early Pleistocene, but it

B C	1523–1027	Shang dynasty (according to <i>Bamboo Annals</i>)
	1027–771	Western Chou dynasty
	770–256	Eastern Chou dynasty
	551–479	Traditional dates of Confucius
	c. 500	Beginning of Iron Age in China
	403–221	Age of the Warring States
	223	Ch'in annihilates Ch'u
	221–207	Ch'in dynasty

is not settled whether he was a direct ancestor of the modern Chinese. It is only in Neolithic times, whose beginning cannot yet be dated, that identifiable Chinese made their appearance in North China. The earlier part of the Neolithic is called the Yang-shao culture, after a village in western Honan, south of the Yellow River, where important discoveries were made in 1921. These and other excavations have shown that the Yang-shao culture was centered around the big knee of the Yellow River, including the lower Fen and Wei river valleys, a territory which has been called the "nuclear area of North China." The people had entered the food-producing stage, and lived in small and temporary villages. Primitive agricultural techniques, probably the slash-and-burn method, compelled them to move continually from one site to another after the soil had been exhausted. For reasons of defense, they preferred locations where rivers met or curved, and they liked to return to these favorite sites when the soil had recovered. Their most important crops were millet and wheat, and they kept domestic animals—dogs, pigs, sheep, and perhaps goats and cattle as well. But they also gathered food, hunted, and fished. They had learned how to make silk. Their pottery, painted in red and black, was rich in types and ornamentation, and may have received impulses from the Black Earth culture in southeastern Europe. Vessels, filled with food, were placed in graves, which indicates belief in an existence after death.

Gradually, this Yang-shao culture evolved into the Lung-shan culture, which has got its name from an archaeological site in Shantung. The Lung-shan age shows progress in all areas. Rice was added to the staple crops, and chickens and horses may have been domesticated. Hunting continued to furnish additional supplies. The villages were larger and inhabited for longer periods of time. People learned to dig wells and to build the first village walls. The pottery was predominantly gray and black and extremely



varied in shape, including tripods with hollow legs and double boilers. Toward the end of the period, decorative geometric patterns became popular. Not only was the Lung-shan culture more advanced than the preceding Yang-shao, it also covered the much larger area of northern and southeastern China.

Traditionally, the Chinese have believed that civilization was created by wise rulers of remote antiquity. One of them introduced hunting, fishing, animal husbandry, and musical instruments, another agriculture and markets. A third added astronomical observations, chariots, and boats, while his wife taught the manufacture of silk, and a minister of his invented writing after having observed the tracks of birds in sand and clay. A few centuries later, three great sovereigns supposedly concentrated their efforts on devising a calendar, coping with floods, and constructing canals, dikes, and irrigation networks. The last of these sovereigns, Yü the Great, is said

to have founded the Hsia dynasty. The Chinese treated these mythical personages as historical figures and assigned dates to them, even reigns of a hundred years and more. But in texts which present the early legends in less systematic fashion, some of the culture heroes appear as part human and part animal. The Hsia dynasty has so far resisted all efforts to prove its authenticity. It is only with the Shang dynasty, which according to tradition followed on the Hsia, that documented history begins in China.

The Shang dynasty marks the beginning of the Bronze Age, which began before the Lung-shan Stone Age had come to an end. Stone continued to be used in the countryside, while bronze increasingly replaced it in the cities. Bronze casting evolved gradually in China, so that it may be an independent discovery. But since the Middle East entered the Bronze Age 1,500 years earlier, it is not impossible that China received impulses from that direction.

Orthodox Chinese chronology dates the Shang dynasty 1766–1122 B.C. The so-called *Bamboo Annals* are more modest. These were discovered in a grave in A.D. 281, and got their name from the bamboo slips on which they had been written. They were lost again, then forged, and finally as far as possible reconstructed from ancient quotations. The *Bamboo Annals* place the Shang dynasty somewhat later, 1523–1027 B.C., figures which cannot be taken for granted either. The orthodox chronology and that of the *Bamboo Annals* coincide only from the year 841 B.C., which is the first completely reliable date in Chinese history.

According to tradition, the Shang dynasty had several consecutive capitals, the last of which was Yin. This city, whose name came to be used for the dynasty as a whole (i.e., Yin or Shang-yin), was located near present An-yang in northern Honan. The striking discovery in about 1899 of numerous oracle bones at that site has once and for all established the Shang as a historical dynasty. Divination by heating bones had been practiced as early as the Lung-shan period, and the Shang dynasty continued and refined this technique. The kings, assisted by diviners, put questions to their ancestors. Heat was then applied to bones, in the earlier period the shoulder blades of pigs, sheep, or cattle, later mainly tortoise shell. Cracks appeared, and from these the answers were deduced. The question, sometimes also the answer, was incised on the bone, and occasionally it was noted what actually happened. For example: "The diviner Ku asked: 'Should we hunt in Kuei, and would we have success with our traps?' That day, we caught 1 tiger, 40 deer, 164 wolves, 159 fawns, and some foxes which were rather small." More than 100,000 inscribed bones have been found, and on these appear not only the traditional names of most of the Shang kings, but also the names of some additional kings whose existence had not been known before. This makes it clear that the rulers of the Shang dynasty are historical persons.

A Shang king, also called the Son of Heaven, had administrative and religious duties. He was assisted by the nobility, which probably consisted largely of his own relatives and local chiefs. There seems to have been no strong, centralized bureaucracy. The cities, in particular the capitals, were surrounded by walls of stamped earth. The political and ceremonial center lay within the wall, while the craftsmen were settled outside, congregating in particular areas according to the specialties. Farther away, the farmers lived in villages, where their private dwellings mainly consisted of roofed pits. They grew wheat, millet, sorghum, and barley. Rice was known but perhaps not cultivated within the central region of the Shang state. The water buffalo had been tamed.

The king performed regular and complicated sacrifices to his ancestors and to various nature gods. The most common sacrificial animals were cattle, sheep, pigs, and dogs. The victims were usually burned or buried, often in sets such as two pigs plus three sheep plus five oxen. Other offerings consisted of precious objects or libations of fermented liquor. Functional and ornamental articles were also placed in the graves of the great to serve them in the hereafter. These included magnificent bronze vessels which are still acclaimed as supreme achievements of mankind. Human sacrifices were common, both at burials and at the consecration of buildings, and could involve more than a hundred victims at a single occasion. Male and female shamans acted as intermediaries between man and the spirits, but were at times sacrificed themselves if their efforts, for instance to produce rain, proved unsuccessful.

The exact size of the Shang state is unknown. It was not large, and centered on the Honan plain on both sides of the Yellow River. Its immediate neighbors were probably neither ethnically nor linguistically different, but the Shang people considered them "barbarians" as long as they did not recognize the Son of Heaven. These neighbors came increasingly under the influence of the more advanced Shang civilization, and learned among other things the technique of bronze casting. The Shang warriors maintained, however, their superiority in war. They protected themselves with helmets, body armor, and shields. Powerful composite bows of wood and horn as well as spears were used from a distance, dagger-axes with wooden handles in hand-to-hand combat. War chariots on two wheels and drawn by two horses took the place of cavalry. The horse was not yet ridden.

As shown by the oracle bones, writing was known in Shang times. The inscriptions make use of more than 2,000 different kinds of characters, which proves that the writing system was well advanced and that it must have rested on earlier stages. No remains of these earlier stages have so far been discovered. Further adaptations took place until the beginning of the Christian era, from which time onward the style of the script has stayed more or less the same.

Structurally, the Chinese writing system passed through four distinct stages. No alphabetic or syllabic scripts were developed, but each word came to be denoted by a different character. The earliest characters were pictographs for concrete words. A drawing of a woman meant a *woman*, or of a broom a *broom*. Such characters were in turn combined to form ideographs. A woman and a broom became a *wife*, three women together *treachery* or *villainy*. The third stage was reached with the phonetic loans, in which existing characters were borrowed for other words with the same pronunciation. The fourth stage was a refinement of the third: sense determinators, or radicals, were added to the phonetic loans in order to avoid confusion. Nine-tenths of the Chinese characters have been constructed by the phonetic method. Unfortunately, the phonetics were often borrowed for other than exact homophones. In such cases, the gaps have widened through the evolution of the language, until today characters may have utterly different pronunciations even though they share the same phonetic. The written language, despite its difficulties, has been an important unifying cultural and political link in China. Although many Chinese dialects are mutually unintelligible, the characters are comprehended through the eye, whatever their local pronunciation. One Chinese may not understand the other's speech, yet reads with ease his writing.

The Shang dynasty was overthrown by neighbors to the west, a people which called itself the Chou and was settled in the central Wei River valley. The Chou had been under the cultural influence of the Shang, so that their victory marked no major break in the growth of Chinese civilization. The orthodox chronology gives 1122 B.C. as the founding of the dynasty, whereas the *Bamboo Annals* place the event a hundred years later, in 1027.

The first Chou king chose the city of Hao, south of the Wei River, as his residence, and it remained the capital until 771 B.C. During this period, known as the Western Chou dynasty, China gradually emerged from the mists of antiquity. It is established that the kings granted fiefs to their relatives and allies, and conducted forceful campaigns against their neighbors. But the nobility grew in power, and the authority of the kings was correspondingly reduced. In 771 B.C. the last king of Western Chou was killed by a noble.

A year later, a son of the dead king was proclaimed successor, and Lo-yi became his capital. This city was situated east of the old capital, in Honan, some distance south of the Yellow River. During the Eastern Chou dynasty, unlike the preceding period, the royal domain was hemmed in on all sides by the fiefs of nobles, and the main functions of the kings were reduced to ceremonial and sacrificial matters. Significantly, Lo-yi was by no means the largest city of its time, measuring less than 2 by 2 miles.

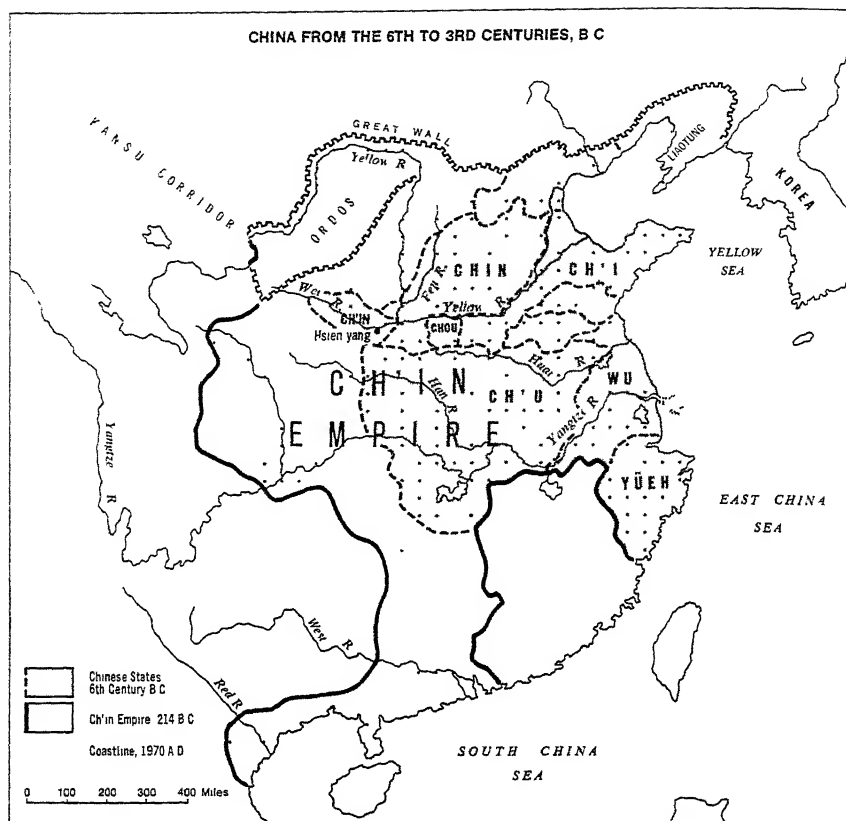
While city walls up to a width of 13 yards were not uncommon, that of Lo-yi was only 5 to 6 yards wide, and clearly played little more than a symbolic role.

Although subsequent developments are not known in detail—not even the names of all the feudal states have been preserved—it is evident that power shifted outward, from the smaller centrally situated fiefs to the large states of the periphery. Of the latter, Ch'i comprised the Shantung peninsula and adjacent parts of the Great Plain, Chin had its point of gravity in southern Shansi, Ch'in gradually grew strong in the Wei River valley. To the south were two other and rather different peripheral states: Ch'u, occupying a vast territory in Central China, and Wu east of it on the coast. Both were only partially Sinified, and Ch'u in particular had a flourishing culture of its own. Its rulers even called themselves kings, a title which, from the Chinese point of view, should be reserved for the Son of Heaven alone. Beyond Wu, the dimly known Yueh people lived along the entire coast from Chekiang to Indochina. A political system evolved in which one peripheral state after the other claimed leadership over the central states and defended them against its rivals. Aptly enough, the last period of the Chou dynasty, from 403 to 221 B.C., is known as the Age of the Warring States. After centuries of fighting, Ch'in finally gained the upper hand. The royal house of Chou ceased to be in 256. Ch'in annexed the weaker states, routed its greatest competitor, Ch'u, in 223, and two years later unified all of China under its rule.

The structure of the feudal system which took shape during the Chou dynasty has been obscured by later thinkers who looked on antiquity as a golden age and projected their utopia into it. Chou culture was not monolithic. There were pronounced regional variations in institutions, owing to local traditions and the degree of Sinification. People in the various states spoke different dialects and, as in the south, even different languages.

The Chou king was a busy man before and after his loss of political power. The formalistic observance of sacrificial and ceremonial matters demanded careful attention. He sacrificed to his ancestors, to Heaven, to the Gods of the Soil and the Crops, to the divinities of mountains and rivers, and to certain heavenly bodies; he inaugurated the seasons and supervised astronomical-astrological observations. Each ritual required particular robes, music, and dances. Then, there was the solemn investiture of feudal lords. The Son of Heaven took a lump of earth from the national altar to the Gods of the Soil and the Crops and gave it to the noble. The latter carried this to his fief and built his own altar over it. His religious duties were modeled on those of the king, but restricted to the local gods.

Traditionally, the highest aristocratic rank was that of duke, followed



by lesser nobles. This hierarchy broke down in the Age of the Warring States, when even in some of the old Chinese fiefs the rulers usurped the title of king. The nobles resided in their domains, where they created subfiefs for vassals of their own. The bonds between the feudal lords and the Son of Heaven were of a religious and frequently consanguineous nature, but these weakened in the course of time. Descent within the same lineage ceased to have significance, except for the injunction against intermarriage. For practical purposes, the important descent group became the clan. New clans were continuously forming through fission of the old, because the birth rate in the nobility was relatively high. As a result, in the last centuries of the Chou dynasty many nobles were reduced to straitened circumstances.

Much less is known about the daily life of the peasants, their economy, customs, and religion. China entered the Iron Age about 500 B.C., from

which time onward a great variety of agricultural iron implements appear, including a primitive plow. But apart from idealized and untrustworthy accounts, there is no information on methods of land distribution and size of holdings. The peasants do not seem to have owned their land in the earlier period, but by the end of Chou had become proprietors through special reforms or simply through the passage of time. They rendered part of their produce as tax, performed *corvée*, and had to serve in war. Great winter hunts of the nobles, for which the peasants were called up, provided military training.

Scores of new cities were built in eastern Chou times, usually rectangular or square and on a north-south axis. They had double walls, and occasionally also a moat. The residences of the nobles and the administrative buildings were within the inner wall, while the craftsmen lived and worked between the inner and outer walls, clustering in particular quarters according to their enterprises. The shops of the merchants were also located there. Commerce was not yet looked down upon, and nobles themselves engaged in it without disgrace. Barter probably remained the common form of trade, but copper coins were gradually coming into use. Although slavery no doubt existed, there is no evidence that it was important for the economy.

The deterioration of the old order encouraged speculation about ways in which the imagined golden age of antiquity could be restored, about other and better forms of government, and about the purpose of existence. Some of the impoverished but educated nobles, who had come to form a class of officials, developed new ideas and tried to propagate them. Schools of thought evolved which for centuries fought and influenced each other. As long as none was victorious, this created an intellectual ferment which is singular in the history of China.

The most influential of all teachers, not in his lifetime but with increasing acclaim after his death, was Confucius. His traditional dates are 551–479. He came from the lower nobility and was a native of Lu, a small but renowned state at the foot of the sacred Mount T'ai. After pursuing studies in history, ritual, and music, after visiting the royal Chou archives in Lo-yi, and, perhaps, after a brief employment in his home state, Confucius spent the rest of his life as a teacher.

Confucius' views are known only through later works, and it is not easy to distinguish between his own teachings and the elaborations of his followers. Basically, he was concerned with the relation of man to man, and declined to engage in metaphysical speculation. As he saw the past, men had lived together in harmony under the sage rulers of the golden age. They had been truthful and wise, good and righteous, and had fulfilled their ceremonial obligations meticulously and with understanding of the moral

content. Man had degenerated since then, but he is fundamentally good and can be salvaged through education. The key to this education is moral example, emanating from the top. If the ruler possesses the qualities of a Superior Man, his virtue will influence those around him. They, in turn, will be examples to others, until all mankind has been permeated. Such an ideal society requires the proper observance of the Five Relationships, in which each individual understands his particular relation to others: that between ruler and subjects, parent and child, elder and younger brother, husband and wife, and friend and friend. Confucius also emphasized the Rectification of Names, whereby he meant that reality and name should truly correspond to one another. Unless each thing lives up to its correct definition which is applicable to it alone, society cannot function. When Confucius lamented that a ruler no longer was a ruler, he wished to say that it is the essence of the ruler to rule well. The final goal is to harmonize the Way of Man and the Way of Heaven, with the king, or Son of Heaven, as intermediary between Heaven and Man.

Confucius was not an innovator. He neither proposed institutions which would break with tradition nor envisaged an end of the Chou dynasty. He wished to bring moral reform to the noble society in which he lived. His great successor Mencius went a step further. Mencius flourished in the latter half of the fourth century B C, and is presumed to have died around 289. Traveling from court to court, he restated the views of Confucius and greatly contributed to the survival of Confucianism. But the political situation had deteriorated since the time of the master, and Mencius realized that the Chou dynasty was bound to fall. He argued therefore that a dynasty rules by the authority of the Mandate of Heaven, that this mandate is not perpetual, and that it depends on performance. Should a dynasty forfeit the mandate through lack of moral dedication to the welfare of the people, Heaven would take it back and grant it to a man worthy of founding a new dynasty. When the people reject their ruler, it proves that Heaven has withdrawn the mandate. This theory was later to have a great influence on Chinese historiography.

The adherents of the School of Law, or Legalists, aimed for a society very different from that advocated by the Confucianists. They did not bemoan the loss of a golden age, but attempted to devise new institutions suited to the new conditions. They believed that man is basically bad and that he must be curbed through stringent laws. The subjects, whose main function is to serve the state, should be made responsible for one another's conduct, and punishments should be meted out not only to the culprit but also to his relatives and neighbors. Efficiency of government should be the paramount consideration. Appointed officials, instead of hereditary nobles, should rule the state. The nation should always be prepared for war, and

valor in battle should be rewarded. Some Legalists succeeded in having themselves appointed to high office in the state of Ch'in, and were there able to translate their theories into practice. This was an important factor in strengthening Ch'in, and in bringing about the unification of China.

Still other thinkers viewed matters solely in relation to their utility. The Moists, named after a certain Mo-tzu, or Master Mo, who flourished in the latter half of the fifth century B.C., opposed warfare, elaborate ceremonies, even music, and favored universal love. While the Confucianists argued that man's capacity for love is limited, and that it therefore should be dispensed from the family outward on a diminishing scale of intensity, the Moists claimed that anything less than universal love would be unprofitable and wasteful. The members of the school were tightly organized under dictatorial leaders and, for a while, achieved considerable political influence. Since they opposed war, they interfered in wars on the weaker side, seeking to restore balance and peace. This turned the Moists, paradoxically, into military experts.

The Naturalists, finally, represent a fairly late development in the thought of Chou times. They explained the universe in terms of Yin and Yang, forces which do not oppose but complement each other. The Yin principle is female, dark, and passive, the Yang principle is male, light, and active. Their interplay explains all functions of nature, such as the roles of man and woman, the alternation of day and night, and the succession of the seasons. The belief in Yin and Yang was later combined with the theory of the Five Elements. Listed in various sequences, among which the most popular was that of wood—fire—earth—metal—water, the elements were supposed to form a cycle which starts anew as soon as it is completed. The concepts of Yin and Yang and the Five Elements were taken over by Confucianism, and became influential from Han times onward. They were not only correlated with each other, but also with the directions of the compass, the seasons, colors, tastes, smells, organs, animals, grains, numbers, and so on. This pseudo-scientific scheme seemed to provide an answer to the coming and going of dynasties (each of which was believed to rule by virtue of a particular element), to illnesses and their cures, to the interpretation of portents, and to much else.

All these schools concerned themselves in various degree with man as a social and political animal. The only movement which categorically refused to do so was Taoism. Lao-tzu, who has been considered its founder, was, according to tradition, an older contemporary of Confucius and author of the text which became known as the *Tao te ching* or *Book of the Tao and Its Power*. Actually, this work belongs to a somewhat later period. It is exceedingly terse, aphoristic, and difficult, and has attracted an unusually great number of not always competent translators. One must turn to

Chuang-tzu, or Master Chuang, who lived in the latter half of the fourth and first years of the third centuries, to gain an understanding of early Taoism. The book which bears his name is not exclusively by him, but parts of it show the unmistakable marks of a highly original mind and a great literary talent.

The Taoists believed that in the material world everything is relative. Concepts exist only as contrasts. There can be no death without life, no goodness without evil. But behind the duality and illusions, there abides a unifying, primary principle, called the Tao. It cannot be defined, and it eludes intellectual pursuit. The Tao can only be intuitively understood in a mystical state reached through meditation. Some Taoists believed that this would be facilitated by certain breathing exercises and sexual techniques, which would also serve to prolong life. It is obvious that Taoism, in its pure form, was irreconcilable with any other school which attempted to define man's role in organized society. Only if man ceased the futile chase after illusions, and sought a state of naturalness, spontaneity, and disengagement, of passive simplicity, could he find fulfillment. This attitude is well exemplified by the following famous passage from the work of Chuang-tzu:

Chuang-tzu fished in the P'u River. The king of Ch'u sent two grandees to present themselves before him and say "I wish to trouble you with the administration of my state." Chuang-tzu held the fishing rod, did not turn his head, and said: "I have heard that there is a sacred tortoise in Ch'u, and that she has been dead for three thousand years. The king keeps her, wrapped in cloth and placed in a box, in the ancestral temple. As regards this tortoise now, would she rather have died and because of that leave behind her bones and be held in honor? Or would she rather have stayed alive and trailed her tail in the mud?" The two grandees said: "She would rather have stayed alive and trailed her tail in the mud." Chuang-tzu said: "Go away. I will trail my tail in the mud."

Since Confucianism gradually became the Chinese state doctrine, its classical texts naturally gained an enormous prestige, and more than any other influenced the thought of later times. This is not to say that the Confucian classics—they date from Chou and early Han times—are all written in a Confucian spirit. Some works were simply adopted by the school and reinterpreted. Neither is it true that every classic deserves its fame. Among the more important is the *Book of Odes*, a collection of early poetry, whose date of compilation is disputed and has been given as somewhere between 800 and 600 B.C. It comprises 305 poems, ranging from folk songs to court compositions. The rhymes were standardized to satisfy the exacting taste of the royal court, and they were sung to musical accompaniments which have long been forgotten. Some of the odes seem undis-

tinguished and pedestrian today. Others, such as this love poem in Burton Watson's translation, have a simple charm which has not lost its appeal:

Blue, blue your collar,
Sad, sad my heart.
Though I do not go to you,
Why don't you send word?

Blue, blue your belt-stone,
Sad, sad my thoughts.
Though I do not go to you,
Why don't you come?

Restless, heedless,
I walk the gate tower
One day not seeing you
Is three months long.

Another early work is the *Book of Documents*, which in its present state has genuine as well as forged sections. It consists largely of speeches and statements attributed to legendary and historical personalities. These pronouncements are clearly not authentic but literary inventions of what people might or should have said. The genuine parts of the *Book of Documents*, like the entire *Book of Odes*, are written in archaic Chinese, and have great linguistic importance apart from their literary value.

The *Book of Changes* is one of the best known and most overestimated works in Chinese literature. It is fundamentally an early oracle handbook, whose interpretations are brief and obscure: "It is advantageous to cross the great river"; "In the 8th month, there will be misfortune." The Chinese, and not a few Westerners, have read a cosmological depth into this text which it does not possess.

Several of the classics are concerned with the ritual system of Chou times and, veering from the solemn to the trivial, discuss such matters as etiquette, ceremonies, music, education, and government. More important to the modern historian are the *Spring and Autumn Annals*, whose compilation is attributed to Confucius himself. They contain brief excerpts from the archives of Lu, arranged in chronological order, covering the years 722–481 B.C. That time span is therefore commonly referred to as the Spring and Autumn Period. In contrast to the *Book of Documents*, the *Spring and Autumn Annals* are not an idealization but a serious historical work. Together with the *Bamboo Annals* and the annals of the Ch'in state, they are the earliest surviving evidence of the awakening of historical perception in China. Since the *Spring and Autumn Annals* are extremely terse, another text has been appended to them, section by section, as an amplifica-

tion. This is the *Tso chuan*, whose title is not fully understood, and whose narrative mixes the real and imagined past into a broad panorama. The *Spring and Autumn Annals* record, for instance, the death of a certain noble on a specific day in 507 B.C. with extreme brevity: "Ch'uan, the viscount of Chu, died." The *Tso chuan* says about the same event:

The viscount of Chu was in his gate tower and looked down on the courtyard. The doorkeeper sprinkled the courtyard with a water pitcher. When the viscount of Chu saw it, he became angry. The doorkeeper said "Yi Yi-ku has urinated here." The viscount ordered him to be seized (Yi Yi-ku), but he could not be found. The viscount became even more excited and angry. Throwing himself on a couch, he fell on a brazier with charcoal, was consumed by fire, and died. Before he was interred, they took five chariots and buried five persons with him. Chuang-kung (the posthumous name of the viscount), while being irascible and hasty, loved cleanliness. Therefore it came to this.

Later scholars found it difficult to reconcile the dry and uninspiring entries of the *Spring and Autumn Annals* with their belief that Confucius was the author. They convinced themselves that the work contained a hidden appraisal of historical figures, and tried to find the key by scrutinizing the wording of each passage. This approach was codified in two great commentaries which are counted among the Confucian classics. The belief that the *Spring and Autumn Annals* and later historical works contain hidden praise and blame became persistent not only in China but also in some Western circles. There are no grounds for it, and it has created much unnecessary confusion.

Esteemed and influential though these classics were, none was venerated as highly as the *Analects*. They were compiled some time after the death of Confucius, and are a fragmentary and unsystematic record of conversations and pronouncements attributed to him. The *Analects* were learned by heart not only by educated men in China but in all of East Asia, and their aphoristic sayings, a few of which are translated here, have been deeply admired precepts for two millennia:

The Master said: "To learn without thinking is in vain. To think without learning is dangerous."

The Master said. "If natural qualities exceed refinement, then one is uncouth. If refinement exceeds natural qualities, then one is like a clerk. If refinement and natural qualities are equally combined, thereafter one is a Superior Man."

The Master said: "If someone is not full of eagerness, I do not instruct him. If he makes no effort, I do not enlighten him. If I lift up one corner, and he does not answer with the other three corners, then I do not repeat the lesson."

Tzu-kung asked: "Is there a single saying which one can act upon until the

end of one's life?" The Master said. "Would it be reciprocity? What you do not wish done to yourself, do not do to others."

A text, which eventually ranked second only to the *Analects*, is the one ascribed to Mencius. It was probably written by his disciples. The work contains not only pronouncements of this great Confucian thinker, but also describes discussions between him and rulers of his time, portraying the skillful way in which he drove home his points. Whether these accounts have any historical trustworthiness is unclear. In any event, they idealize Mencius' confrontations with the feudal lords, as in this encounter:

Mencius said to king Hsuan of Ch'i: "If among the subjects of Your Majesty there were one who entrusted his wife and children to a friend and went on a trip to Ch'u, and if on his return the friend had let the wife and children freeze and starve, what should be done about it?" The king said: "He should cast him off." Mencius said: "If the Master of the Judges were unable to direct the judges, what should be done about it?" The king said: "One should dismiss him." Mencius said: "If within the state there is no good government, what should be done about it?" The king turned his head to the left and right and spoke of other things.

Further reading suggestions follow Chapter 11.

11 The Chinese Empire: The Formative Period

The unification of China had been made possible by a number of remarkable statesmen. They had introduced a series of reforms in the old Ch'in state which gradually had strengthened this feudal domain to the point where it could unify China under its rule. These reforms were inspired by the Legalist School. Laws were clearly promulgated and strictly enforced. The peasants were given ownership of their land and were permitted to buy and sell it. Irrigation projects were carried out to promote agriculture. Weights and measures were standardized. Appointed officials, instead of hereditary nobles, governed the people. The district (hsien) became the basic unit of provincial administration. The effectiveness of the army was increased through adoption of the powerful crossbow and through replacement of the clumsy war chariots by cavalry.

With the unification of 221 B.C., China for the first time in history became a single nation. The northern border enclosed the Liaotung Penin-

B C	214	First expansion of Chinese empire
	213	Burning of the Books
	210	Death of First Emperor
	206	Destruction of imperial library
206-A.D	9	Former Han dynasty
	191	Book Burning Edict rescinded
	141	Legalists excluded from government careers
	124	Imperial Academy established
127-101		Second expansion of Chinese empire
	87	Regency established
	51	Peace between China and Hsiung-nu
A.D.	9-23	Interregnum of Wang Mang
	25-220	Later Han dynasty
	49	Peace between China and Southern Hsiung-nu
	65	First Chinese reference to Buddhism
	89	Regency reintroduced
	184	Uprising of Yellow Turbans
	220-265	China divided
	265-316	Western Chin dynasty
	316	Loss of northern China
	317-589	China divided

sula and southern Manchuria in the east, and the Ordos bend of the Yellow River in the west. It was defended by a Great Wall, which in major parts was based on earlier fortifications. Korea and the Kansu corridor did not belong to the empire. In the south, Hunan, parts of Kwangtung and Kwangsi, and perhaps also the Red River delta in Indochina were incorporated into the new state during 214. Kiangsi and Fukien in the south-east, and Kweichow and Yunnan in the southwest, were not yet Chinese. The seat of the central government was Hsien-yang, the capital of the former Ch'in state in the Wei River valley. The king of Ch'in became the Son of Heaven, but since the title of king had lost much of its prestige, he adopted a different and imposing designation: *huang-ti*. It means August Lord, but is usually translated as emperor. He was the First Emperor (*Shih-huang-ti*).

The institutions of the old Ch'in state were extended to all of the new Ch'in empire. The feudal system was abolished in favor of an appointed

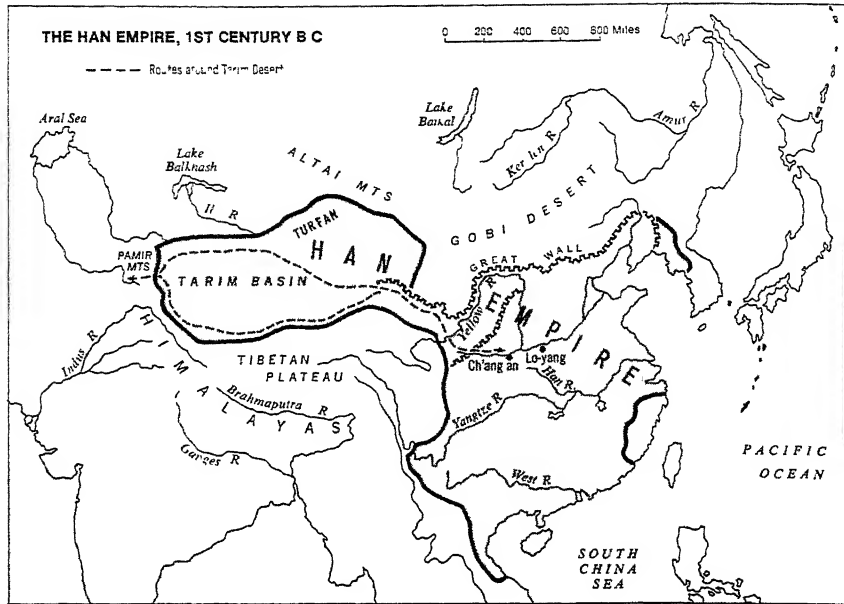
bureaucracy. In place of the former states, the country was divided into commanderies, consisting of varying numbers of districts. The laws, currencies, weights, measures, and even the distance between cart wheels were standardized. Carrying standardization to the extreme, a minister proposed in 213 B.C. that all books not sponsored by the Legalists should be burned, excepting only works on agriculture, medicine, pharmacy, and divination. The imperial library was designated to remain intact as a repository of knowledge. This policy was clearly intended to wipe out the intellectual opposition to Legalism and the centralized state.

If the Ch'in dynasty had lasted, the political effects of the Book Burning Edict would have been far-reaching. Legalism might have been permanently established as the state doctrine, and men of other persuasions excluded from government careers. The Confucianists have never tired of blaming the First Emperor for this attempt at intellectual restriction, conveniently overlooking the fact that they themselves suppressed their opponents as soon as they had the power to do so. But the consequences of the persecution were perhaps less harmful for literature than it might seem. Books in private possession cannot have been many, since they were bulky and expensive (copied by hand on wooden or bamboo slips, and tied together accordion fashion). In spite of threatened punishments, the edict could be evaded and books hidden.

An unanticipated catastrophe was the destruction of the entire imperial library in 206 B.C. during the civil war. But since the teachings of the schools were usually memorized and handed down orally from master to disciple, it was possible after 191 B.C., when the Book Burning Edict was belatedly rescinded by the Han dynasty, to reconstruct the texts from memory and from preserved manuscripts.

The First Emperor died on a tour of inspection in 210 B.C. Intrigues crippled the central government, and during the following year civil war broke out in the provinces. By the end of 207, the Ch'in dynasty had ceased to exist, a swift collapse traditionally blamed on the harshness of the Legalist state. But since the Legalists favored agriculture, and the peasants were the vast majority of the population, this view is not convincing. While the real reasons have not yet been explored, resurgence of regionalism must have been an important factor. As soon as the grip of the central government weakened, centrifugal forces asserted themselves. They were always strong under the surface, and continued to make themselves felt throughout Chinese history.

The victor in the civil war was a commoner, who became king of Han in 206, was proclaimed emperor in 202, and is known in history by his posthumous name as Emperor Kao. He retained Han as the name of his dynasty and dated it from 206, although it really began four years later.



His descendants occupied the throne until A.D. 9. Then followed an interregnum, after which the Han dynasty was restored in 25 and remained in power until 220. It is therefore customary to speak of the Former and Later Han dynasties.

The empire was at first smaller than it had been in Ch'in times. The northern Ordos Region had been taken by the nomads, and in the south a Chinese adventurer had founded an independent state with the capital at present-day Canton. Between 127 and 101 B.C. the energetic Emperor Wu reconquered these lost territories, and further expanded the state by incorporating Kweichow, Yunnan, a large part of Korea, and the Kansu corridor. Only Fukien on the southeast coast remained beyond the Chinese border throughout both Han dynasties.

During the Han era, Confucianism adapted itself to the needs of the empire and became the state doctrine. The Legalists had proved their capacity for ruling, and if the Confucianists wished to outmaneuver them, they were forced to accept some of their viewpoints and techniques. Without losing its moral zeal, Confucianism developed into a useful tool of government, precisely because it was flexible and eclectic. It borrowed not only from the Legalists, but also particularly from the Naturalists. Needless to say, the more successful Confucianism became, and the more Confucius was enshrined as universal sage, the more his followers departed from his teaching.

The victory of Confucianism was therefore gradual. The first major success came in 141 B.C., when the Legalists were excluded from government careers. In 124 B.C., the Imperial Academy was established with a Confucian curriculum. To reconcile discrepancies in the transmission of the Confucian classics, and to establish standard texts, discussions were held in 51 B.C. and A.D. 79. The emperors participated on both occasions and acted as arbiters. In A.D. 175 the orthodox version of the classics was engraved on stone.

The Han government was modeled on that of Ch'in. This administrative system underwent many adaptations in the course of the centuries, but it was not basically altered. There was always more continuity than change in China's bureaucratic institutions, from the establishment of the empire in 221 B.C. until its fall in A.D. 1912.

The traditional nobility of Chou times had disappeared. Although Emperor Kao had taken the retrograde step of enfeoffing kings, they were gradually shorn of power. The royal dignity came to be conferred only on members of the imperial house, who after an abortive uprising in 154 B.C. lost all influence on the administration of their fiefs. The highest title in the nobility below the kings was that of marquis, followed by nineteen lesser ranks. Such titles were granted by the government as a reward for merit or as an act of favor and were frequently revoked. Whether they were kings or lesser nobles, the government kept a sharp eye on their conduct, and demoted them for real or imagined infringements of the law. Within a hundred years from the death of Emperor Kao in 195 B.C., for example, all of his marquisates had ceased to be.

The various departments of the central government were each under a minister, among whom the Chancellor was the most important. He was in charge of personnel, the state budget, expenditure, registers, and accounts, and acted also as a spokesman for the bureaucracy. The Grandee Secretary had supervisory duties similar to those of the Chancellor, while the Grand Commandant controlled the military. The Chancellor, Grandee Secretary, and Grand Commandant were jointly referred to as the Three Excellencies. Next in rank came the Nine Ministers, whose duties included management of ritual and education; direction of the imperial household; guarding of the palace; control of the imperial chariots, horses, and government pastures; administration of justice; supervision of the nobility, and contacts with the barbarians; registration of the imperial clan; collection of revenue and charge of the state granaries; and the processing of edicts and memorials. There was intentional overlapping of functions in order to provide checks and prevent fraud. Special officials had the duty to remonstrate with the emperor if his performance was poor, while others inspected the conduct of the bureaucracy. This was the origin of the later famous censorate.

The empire was divided into twelve provinces, which were merely groupings of territories for purpose of inspection. The large metropolitan area formed a thirteenth unit with Ch'ang-an as the capital in Former Han and Lo-yang during Later Han. Many of the following dynasties gave preference to the same two cities. For each province, one inspector was appointed who headed a sizable staff. He went on regular tours to scrutinize the performance of the officials and reported his findings to the central government. The provinces consisted of a varying number of commanderies, whose total grew from 36 in Ch'in times to 103 in A.D. 2. Each commandery was under an administrator, aided by departments. The commanderies were divided into districts, for which the central government appointed magistrates. The districts numbered 1,578 in A.D. 2, some 400 of which were abolished during Later Han for economic reasons. They consisted of still smaller administrative units, whose heads were not appointed by the central government but selected locally.

Civil servants were recruited by several methods. The upper echelons of the bureaucracy had the right to appoint their own subordinates. High officials enjoyed the special privilege to recommend sons or nephews, who were first given duties in the palace and then gradually absorbed into the bureaucracy. Unsolicited recommendations were a further possibility, but, as in all cases, the sponsor was held responsible for the conduct of his candidate. The emperor, at times, directly summoned men (who did not necessarily have to accept the invitation). Studies at the Imperial Academy could lead to official appointment. Finally, some offices were sold by the government as a source of revenue.

Historically more remarkable than these unsystematic forms of recruitment was the examination system, which, eventually, became the all-important entrée into officialdom. Its primitive beginnings were devised by the Han. The system began with edicts at irregular intervals—the first known case was in 196 B.C.—inviting specific officials to recommend morally upstanding men. From the middle of Former Han, it also became routine that each commandery annually recommended two men. A quota system was introduced in A.D. 102, based on the size of population and the location of each commandery. Written examinations were given but not required from every category of candidates.

The main cleavage in ancient China was between the educated and the uneducated, the literate gentry from which the officials were drawn and the illiterate peasants. The great gentry families had national importance. The small gentry had local influence and merged on the lower levels with the rich peasantry. The peasants, who constituted the bulk of the population, paid most of the taxes, had to perform *corvée*, and were called up for military service. The army consisted mainly of militia; professional soldiers

were few Merchants were discriminated against, a prejudice which became more pronounced in the course of history, but it was not yet strong enough in Han times to prevent the gentry from engaging in commerce

The rigidity of Chinese society has been much exaggerated. The division into the educated and uneducated levels of society was not hard and fast. The line could be crossed, and the gentry readily absorbed newcomers. On the national level, few families remained influential for long. Each dynasty brought a new elite to the fore which rarely survived for long at the center of power. It would be overturned in the ruthless struggle of cliques, and others would move up to take its place. Social mobility seems to have been the rule, rather than the exception, in Chinese history.

While never codified in a constitution, power was shared by the emperor and the bureaucracy. Major policy decisions were discussed at the court, and the advice of high officials, if unanimous, was considered binding. The emperor did not interfere in the daily routine of the government departments. The appointment of high officials was a delicate matter in which the emperor's choice was frequently restricted, connections had to be considered at least as much as competence. The balance of power between the emperor and the bureaucracy was therefore subtle and shifting. At the one extreme, the emperor could content himself with a passive role. At the other, he could attempt personal rule by manipulating advice, by intimidating the officials, or by tripping them up on one or another of the many laws. Another device for concentrating power in the emperor's hands was the system of the Inner Court. The Inner Court consisted of such men as secretaries and the eunuchs of the imperial harem who had easy access to his person and could be dominated by him. Once the flow of documents to and from the throne had been channeled through the Inner Court, the influence of the high career officials, or the Outer Court, was automatically reduced.

If the emperor had not yet attained his majority, the empress dowager was entitled to govern in his place. Normally, empresses preferred to appoint one of their male relatives as regent. Nothing prevented an adult emperor, uninterested in government, from adopting the same course and formally or informally delegating his power. In such cases, the representative would usually head the Inner Court.

It follows that within the complex institutional structure many interests strove for influence: emperors, regents, the Inner and Outer Courts, sometimes ambitious empresses or empresses dowager, and always the ubiquitous cliques. But whoever succeeded in dominating the government never possessed unlimited power. Traditional China was not a despotism in any strict sense of the word.

The first regent was appointed in 87 B.C., and in the beginning the

institution seems to have functioned well. It was only with Emperor Ch'eng's long reign (32-7 B.C.) that the situation changed. He took no interest in government and was willing to delegate authority to his mother's relatives. She belonged to the great Wang clan, and appointed, one after another, five members of that clan as regents. The last of these was Wang Mang, who gradually outmaneuvered all opposition, until in A.D. 9 he could declare the Han dynasty defunct and ascend the throne himself.

Wang Mang is one of the most discussed figures in Chinese history. The sources are biased against him, and his policies have been misunderstood. Many of his so-called reforms were in fact no reforms at all but merely continuations of Former Han practices. Where he departed from them, as in his attempt to redistribute land, he was guided by Confucian ideas and doubtless had the warm support of his Confucian advisers. There can have been no deep discontent with Wang Mang among the intelligentsia, since no gentry uprisings took place from A.D. 9 to 22. He fell because of events beyond his control, the cumulative effects of two major changes in the course of the Yellow River Floods and famines set in motion large-scale migrations. Displaced and starving peasants banded together, the government armies were defeated, supporters of the Han house exploited the situation, and in 23 Wang Mang was killed by the rebels.

The nation was united again under a distant branch of the former imperial clan, officially in the year 25, although peace was not restored until 36. The new dynasty was called the Later Han. The regency was reintroduced in 89, whereupon the struggle between cliques became even more violent than it had been during Former Han. At times, even emperor and regent were pitted against each other. The eunuchs sided with the emperor, which increased their power in the Inner Court. The civil servants, from not unselfish motives, were hostile to the eunuchs, and continued to be so throughout Chinese history. In a great confrontation of 169, the eunuchs were victorious, only to be themselves annihilated in 189.

While the central government was being weakened through the conflict in the capital, rebellions broke out in the provinces. The most important one was that of the Yellow Turbans in 184. During decades of fighting, the leading generals maneuvered for personal power. When the last emperor of Later Han was finally forced to abdicate in 220, this was only the symbolic end of the dynasty. In practical political terms, it had ceased to exist long before.

Just as the virtue of the Son of Heaven was thought to permeate all of China, it was envisioned that it would spread in time beyond the borders.

Once the lesser people had been transformed through his moral guidance, they would willingly recognize him as the ruler of all men, expressing homage by the act of paying tribute. In short, the Chinese construed cultural superiority as moral supremacy.

It is true that during its formative period China had no contacts with other cultures of the same splendor. The Han Chinese were dimly aware of India and the Roman world, but these civilizations were too far away to shake their self-confidence. They could convince themselves of their own primacy. This attitude became instinctive in the course of time, although it required a certain capacity for self-deception. Tribute was a disguised form of trade, since the presents brought by foreign peoples were richly matched by Chinese gifts. It should have been obvious to intelligent observers that many missions reaching China from abroad were only attracted by the opportunity for profit.

It was even harder to ignore the fact that the nomads of the north could not be permanently curbed by either benevolence or force. At the same time that the Chinese empire was being founded, the Hsiung-nu in Central Asia had been organized into a tribal federation under a supreme ruler called the Shan-yü. Little is known about the ethnic background and linguistic affiliation of the Hsiung-nu. They raided China at will, and even came within sight of the capital. The Chinese bought peace by sending annual gifts and an occasional princess. In spite of his supposed place on the summit of a world hierarchy, the Son of Heaven in his letters addressed the Hsiung-nu ruler as an equal. This period of appeasement lasted until 133 B.C., when Emperor Wu took the offensive and the great Hsiung-nu wars began. Until the end of the second century B.C., Emperor Wu had the military initiative, which he used to expand the empire toward the northwest. A by-product was the conquest of the Western Region, a territory largely corresponding to the Tarim Basin and the Turfan Oasis. It was important for its famous trade routes, on which Chinese silk was carried to the West.

For the next half-century, Chinese and Hsiung-nu held each other in balance. This changed dramatically when dissension among the Hsiung-nu persuaded one of two rival Shan-yü to make peace with China, and to pay an unprecedented visit to the imperial capital in 51 B.C. The Chinese sources seriously misrepresent the event by depicting it as a subjugation of the Hsiung-nu. In reality, the Hsiung-nu had not been defeated. They simply offered peace, which meant to cease their raids, during a brief period of internal troubles. That China was the greater power of the two was acknowledged by the visit of the foreign ruler, but the visit was not an act of homage. Most Chinese officials misinterpreted it in typical Sinocentric fashion, and proposed that the Shan-yü, as a barbarian, should be

ranked below the Chinese kings. The emperor had the good sense to refuse, and to treat the Shan-yu as an equal. Considered objectively, two independent nations had made peace. Whether it would last depended on the Hsiung-nu, not the Chinese. It lasted until the reign of Wang Mang, when a war party emerged among the Hsiung-nu. Wang Mang restrained it successfully by diplomatic and military means. At his death, the northern border was intact, and at least the northern silk route through the Tarim Basin remained in Chinese hands.

During the civil war after Wang Mang's fall, the Western Region was lost to China. The Hsiung-nu resumed their raids, and actively supported one of the Chinese pretenders to the throne. The founder of the Later Han dynasty reacted passively to the northern border problems, even to the point of evacuating a number of commanderies. The Hsiung-nu entered these territories and began to live in China proper.

In A.D. 46, a new dissension occurred among the Hsiung-nu, which in 49 led to a split between a southern and northern branch, each under a separate Shan-yü. The southern Shan-yü, in a weaker position than his predecessor a hundred years earlier, made peace with China and, at least symbolically, declared himself a subject. The Chinese government did not take this unexpected opportunity to defeat the northern Hsiung-nu and install the southern Shan-yü as an ally in the old grazing grounds north of the Gobi. Instead, the southern Hsiung-nu were permitted to remain in the Ordos Region and northern Shansi within the Chinese border. When the Chinese finally defeated the northern Hsiung-nu in a great offensive of 89, it was too late. Although the Western Region came under Chinese domination once again, other nomadic tribes filled the vacuum left by the northern Hsiung-nu in Central Asia. The southern Hsiung-nu stayed on Chinese soil, and formed a frequently hostile state within the state. China's grip on the northwest slackened, and the initiative shifted to the southern Hsiung-nu. In 308 the rupture took place, which in 316 led to the temporary loss of all of northern China.

The victory of the Hsiung-nu was facilitated by the depopulation of the northwest. Owing to the changes in the course of the Yellow River, and pressure from the Hsiung-nu and Tibetans in the northwest, a major migration from north to south took place in Later Han times. This led to the first great colonization of South China, through which in Hunan, Kiangsi, and Kwangtung alone the population quadrupled. The Chinese settled on the alluvial soil of the major river valleys, engulfing or absorbing the local aborigines. Those who opposed Chinese rule were forced to withdraw into the lesser river valleys and the mountains. Because of the steep influx of colonists in Later Han, the more belligerent of the aboriginal tribes began to fight back. Whereas during the last two centuries B.C. the aboriginal

uprisings (the Chinese called them rebellions) had been only three, their number increased to fifty-four during the first two centuries A.D.

It is clear, therefore, that the Han empire was not a Chinese island surrounded by barbarians. In the northwest, Hsiung-nu, Tibetans, and other tribesmen lived side by side with the Chinese and gradually proved the stronger. In the south, the aborigines were step by step displaced by the Chinese and generally were the weaker. Only the Great Plain was inhabited solely by the Chinese.

By the end of Later Han times, the major characteristics of traditional China had taken form. In territory, the empire nearly corresponded to modern China proper. It had a highly centralized government under an emperor who reigned or ruled according to his preference. The main channels for the wielding of political power had been shaped. An efficient bureaucracy had been created, based on the principle of checks and balances. The examination system had been devised. Social rise was common. There were strong centrifugal forces under the surface, but rebels were rarely revolutionaries; they only strove for influence within the system. The script and literature were unifying forces. The bureaucracy engaged the energies of the ambitious. Confucianism offered a satisfactory explanation of man's role in society. Neo-Taoism and Buddhism appealed to those who sought greater spiritual depth. The achievements of China's civilization, coupled with its geographic isolation, had engendered a sense of superiority and a claim to moral and political supremacy among mankind.

The Han dynasty is a formative period not only of Chinese history but of its historiography as well. The work which created an entirely new genre and set a trend for two millennia is the *Historical Records*, compiled privately by Ssu-ma T'an and his son Ssu-ma Ch'ien, whose names rank with the greatest historians of all times. They conceived the idea of writing a complete history of China, from the legendary sovereigns to Emperor Wu. Ssu-ma Ch'ien finished this ambitious undertaking after 99 B.C. at great personal sacrifice. He was castrated on the order of Emperor Wu, who felt that he had been slighted in the work. During Later Han times, another remarkable family of historians continued on the same course. Pan Piao (d. A.D. 54) and his son Pan Ku (d. 92) compiled the *Documents of Han*, a history of Former Han. Similar histories were later written for all dynasties, sometimes lumping several minor ones together, but private efforts were supplanted by enterprises sponsored by the government and compiled by committees of scholars. It became standard practice for a new dynasty to publish an official history of its predecessor. In this way, their number has grown to twenty-four or twenty-five, depending on how they are counted.

The dynastic histories are not analytic studies in the Western sense. They are vast compilations of source materials, some copied verbatim, others abbreviated or paraphrased. The historian let the documents speak for themselves, and rarely expressed his own opinion, but since he made a selection, his role was more than that of a copyist. He had a viewpoint. His purpose was not to glorify each emperor or the ruling intelligentsia, nor to write handbooks for future generations of bureaucrats. He belongs, rather, to the common stage of early historiography, where history was thought to have been made by individuals alone. This is the reason why he concentrated on those who played important roles in their time: the emperors and empresses, officials, scholars and writers, eccentrics, the virtuous, and the rebels. Even the early historians of the Ssu-ma and Pan families were dimly aware of a further step in historical perception, since they also devoted sections to foreign tribes, and grouped materials under such headings as calendar, ceremonies, law, commerce, state sacrifices, portents and astrology, administrative geography, canals, and bibliography. But traditional Chinese historiography never came fully to realize or admit that impersonal forces also act as historical causes. The glory of Chinese historiography is therefore also its limitation. The format of the dynastic histories became standard, and provided the world with an unparalleled accumulation of source materials. At the same time, originality was stifled. There were independent historians of great talent who went their own way, but they stood outside the main tradition and had no lasting influence.

The reliability of the dynastic histories is uneven. Outright falsification of facts does occur, but is less common than distorted emphasis. Each dynasty wished to justify its own rise to power by discrediting the last ruler of the preceding one, and the dynastic historian was under pressure to select his sources accordingly. It is unlikely that he needed much persuasion. He was influenced by the Confucian philosophy of history, first clearly formulated by Mencius, which held that each dynasty ruled under the Mandate of Heaven. The historian simply chose or presented his documents in such a way that they seemed to prove why a dynasty founder had been worthy of the mandate and his predecessor not. In the same fashion, he gave short shrift to men who never received the mandate at all, describing them as bandits or usurpers for whom nothing good could be said. Documents which contradicted such interpretations were suppressed. For instance, if Wang Mang's attempt to found a dynasty had been successful, he would have appeared in historical writing with all the real and imagined attributes of a dynasty founder, basking in Heaven's approval. His overthrow and the restoration of Han made that impossible. Wang Mang shrunk into an incompetent schemer with delusions of grandeur.

With the collapse of Han, China fell apart into three territories: Wei in the north, Wu in the southeast, and Shu in the southwest. This period is usually called that of the Three Kingdoms, although Three States would be more accurate. The country was briefly reunited by the Western Chin dynasty (265–316), whose capital was Lo-yang. But the southern Hsiung-nu continued to live on Chinese soil as a hostile minority, and the long-delayed clash was about to take place. Their leader proclaimed himself emperor in 308, Lo-yang was taken in 311, and Ch'ang-an fell in 316.

From 317 to 589, China was divided. In the south, five Chinese dynasties followed on each other. All had their capital in the area of present Nanking. None was strong. They were not even in firm control of southern China, and at times dominated only the lower Yangtze valley and Chekiang. While a restoration of the empire was beyond the power of the southern dynasties, traditional Chinese culture was sponsored by their rulers, and flourished under their patronage.

In North China, the period was filled by a bewildering number of major and minor dynasties, most of them barbarian. Conquerors from the north and Tibet followed on the southern Hsiung-nu. All faced the same problem of how to superimpose their tribal aristocracies on China's social order, and how to adjust themselves to the Chinese system of government without losing their own identity. The longer a barbarian dynasty reigned, the more it succumbed to Sinification. This increased the discontent of conservative tribal elements, without lessening the tension between conquerors and conquered. Then, as later, no foreign dynasty was able to find a compromise. But before they were absorbed or swept away, the barbarians made lasting contributions to China's material and spiritual culture.

The centuries of division were an era of intense activity in philosophical and religious thought. The political disintegration had been a blow to Confucianism, identified as it had become with the orderly conditions of a unified empire. Thinkers looked afresh at man's role in society. Taoism went through several stages of adaptation and lost its earlier depth and serenity. Buddhism ceased to be a foreign religion, was assimilated into Chinese spiritual life, and proliferated into many sects.

The Neo-Taoists considered themselves followers of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu, but did not hesitate to reinterpret their sayings. They attempted to incorporate Confucius into Taoism by acknowledging him as the greatest of all sages, and by explaining his teaching in terms of Taoist metaphysics. They further asserted that man must be natural, as he cannot go against his nature. The Tao is nothingness, and therefore cannot guide him. Since the natural order of things cannot be changed, the Taoist does not need to reject society, provided that he stays mentally detached. A fashion developed among Neo-Taoist intellectuals and sympathizers to

gather in some place of natural beauty and, spurning conventions, discuss metaphysical problems in a spontaneous and intuitive manner. Others took a less aesthetic and more hedonistic attitude, and advocated the unrestrained pursuit of pleasure.

The Taoists had early explored physical exercises for the prolongation of life, and had also turned to alchemy. In their stubborn search for the elixir of life, the alchemists were influenced by the theories of the Naturalists as well as popular medicine, and accidentally made a host of scientific discoveries. Some Neo-Taoists also developed a cult, according to which the human body is inhabited by vast numbers of gods whose cooperation is necessary for the achievement of immortality.

Taoism mingled more and more with popular religion. The legendary Yellow Lord (Huang-ti) and Lao-tzu fused into a single divinity, Huang-lao, and became for a time the supreme god in the Taoist pantheon. Influenced by Buddhism, the Taoists also established monasteries and convents. But religious Taoism broke into sects and never became a unified church.

Buddhism, in its Mahayana form, came to China half a millennium after the historical Buddha had lived in northern India. The first reliable reference to it dates from A.D. 65, and concerns the provincial court of an emperor's half-brother on the southern part of the Great Plain. Since Buddhism reached China through the Tarim Basin in Central Asia, this religion must have been known in the great cities of Ch'ang-an and Lo-yang earlier than 65. In any event, by the second century A.D. Buddhist monks were no longer unusual in China.

The first task of the Buddhist missionaries was to translate their favorite scriptures, a heroic undertaking. Some knew little or no Chinese, and had to depend on assistants and translation by stages. Furthermore, the Chinese language lacked counterparts to the Sanskrit and Pali terms of the original texts. In this dilemma, the early missionaries made use of Taoist terminology, which gave their primitive translations a Taoist flavor. The most famous of the pioneer translators was a Parthian, whose Chinese name is An Shih-kao. From 148 onward, he was active in Lo-yang for more than twenty years. Gradually the translations became more sophisticated, and reached a high level with Kumārajīva (d. 413), a Central Asian from Kucha, whose father was an Indian.

During the centuries of division, Buddhism was remarkably successful, and particularly appealed to the Chinese intelligentsia of the south and the barbarian rulers of the north. It was a time of sects. Hui-yüan (d. 416) introduced the cult of Amitābha, the Buddha of Measureless Light. This was the Pure Land Sect, which taught that believers could gain salvation through faith and would then be reborn in the Western Paradise or Pure Land. The T'ien-t'ai Sect received its name from a mountain in Chekiang. Its founder, Chih-yi (d. 597), attempted to synthesize the various Buddhist

teachings Each supposedly reflected one aspect of the truth, while the ultimate truth was revealed in the Lotus Sutra Better known to Westerners is Ch'an (Japanese Zen) Buddhism, which, according to tradition, was brought to China by Bodhidharma He seems to have lived in the fifth century, but the early history of Ch'an is very obscure Soon after 675 it split into two schools, reunited, and then divided again into several branches By the eleventh century, two major Ch'an sects remained the Lin-chi (Japanese Rinzai) and the Ts'ao-tung (Japanese Sōtō) Ch'an reacted against scriptural Buddhism and religious practices It claimed that Buddhahood is within man, not without, and that it is achieved through enlightenment The disciple is prepared for enlightenment through physical hardship and intellectual frustration What divided the Ch'an School was the question of whether enlightenment comes suddenly or gradually, the Lin-chi Sect taking the former view and the Ts'ao-tung Sect the latter The Chen-yen or True Word Sect, finally, was transplanted from India to China in the eighth century by Amoghavajra Influenced by Tantric Hinduism, this sect emphasized occult doctrine, magic formulas, masses for the dead, and cosmological drawings (mandalas)

As soon as Buddhism had put down roots in China, Chinese monks began to visit India They went as pilgrims to the holy places, studied at the Buddhist centers, and collected Buddhist scriptures and relics Some left accounts of their experiences Fa-hsien went to India in 399 via the Tarim Basin and Pamir, returning by sea in 414 Hsuan-tsang departed from China in 629 and came back in 645, travelling both ways through Central Asia Yi-ching left South China by ship in 671 and returned, again by sea, in 695, after a stopover of ten years in Sumatra These were only the most famous of the many travellers who went to India driven by their faith.

Buddhism had entered China as a foreign religion, and its enemies continued to look upon it as alien It was successful because it responded to spiritual needs adapted to Chinese conditions, compromising as Confucianism and Taoism had before it The more Sinified Buddhism became, the less it had in common with the teaching of the Buddha, and eventually it degenerated But before its spiritual and economic collapse, Buddhism lastingly influenced the thought and art of China

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Classical Antiquity: Jews and Greeks

12 The New Culture: 1200–200 B.C.

If the history of the ancient Western world were divided by content rather than convention we should recognize only two periods, the first from the appearance of writing to the invasions of 1200–900 B.C. which broke up the ancient Near East, the second from 1200 B.C. to the invasions of A.D. 400–700 which broke up the hellenized Roman and Persian empires. Of these periods the first, with the Neolithic which preceded it, saw the development of the physical and social techniques basic to human society—agriculture, pottery, metalworking, glassmaking, the domestication of animals, and the organization of men. The second saw an enormous increase of the civilized world in area, population, and equipment, important technical advances (glass blowing, concrete), and, more important, a profound change in the direction of human concern, from the mastery of the physical world to the discovery of the intellectual and spiritual life.

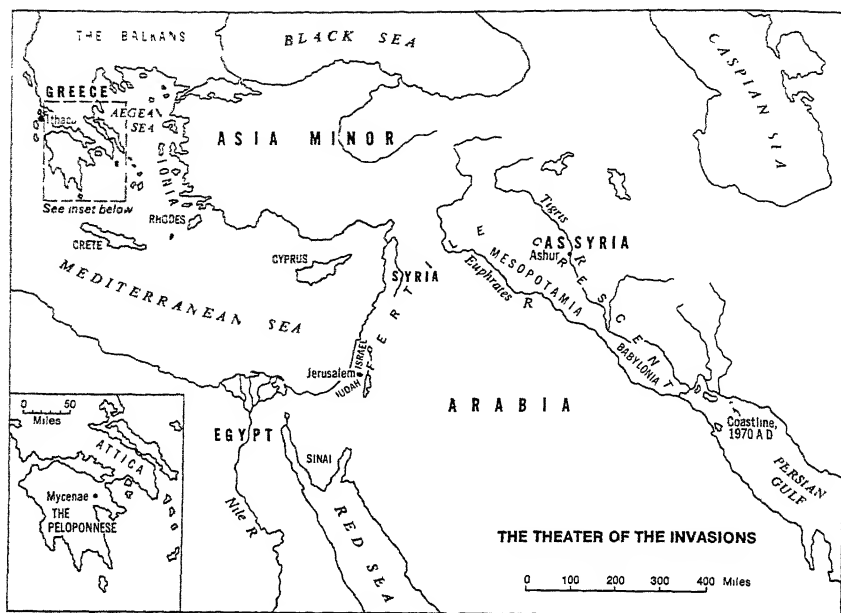
The great invasions which destroyed late Bronze Age civilization came from two directions. From the northwest a variety of tribes, called by the Egyptians the “sea peoples,” began raiding the eastern coasts of the Mediterranean in the late thirteenth century. In 1200 the Hittite empire was destroyed and Cyprus raided. They then came down the coast of Syria, destroying the cities there, but were stopped at the entrance of Egypt. Some of them, the Peleshet, whom the Greeks were to call “Philistines,” settled in Palestine, which gets its name from them. The rest dispersed, and traces of them are to be found in many regions around the Mediterranean. In Greece it was probably they who burned the Mycenaean palace at Pylos before 1200. During the next century new waves of barbarians, the Dorian Greeks and the “northwest” Greeks, overran the mainland (except Attica)

All dates are approximate, at best to decades.

- B.C. 1250 Israelites beginning to invade Palestine
 1230 Destruction of Troy; "sea peoples" invade Egypt
 1200 Mycenaean palace of Pylos burned; the Hittite empire and Syrian coastal cities destroyed, perhaps by the "sea peoples"; beginning of the Iron Age
 1190 The Philistines settle on the Palestinian coast
 1130 Mycenae destroyed
 1100 Dorian invasion of Greece, Arameans using camels invade the Fertile Crescent
 1075 Collapse of Assyria
 1000 David rules most of Palestine and Transjordan
 925 Death of Solomon, separation of Israel from Judah
 900 Revival of Assyria, important artistic and military developments (siege warfare, battering ram) through the following century, King Asa of Judah acts against the worship of gods other than Yahweh; development of heroic legend in Greece and among the Israelites; biography of David, Hebrew historiography
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and the Peloponnese. Mycenae fell about 1130, and the Dorians pushed on through the southernmost islands as far as Crete and Rhodes, while the Greeks who had been displaced by these invasions themselves overran the central Aegean islands and, about 1000, the western coast of Asia Minor.

While these invasions from the northwest swept over Greece, Asia Minor, and the Mediterranean coasts, other hordes of invaders came from the southeast, from the fringes of the Arabian desert, where the semi-nomads, mostly Aramaic-speaking, began first to infiltrate and then to conquer the countries around the Fertile Crescent—Palestine, Syria, northern Mesopotamia, Assyria and Babylonia. The movement began early: the Israelites were already in Palestine before 1220. Farther north it seems to have become serious only after the fall of the Hittite empire in 1200. To the east it was delayed yet longer by the resistance of Assyria, which wore itself out in a generation of wars against the Arameans around 1100. But about this time the Arameans gained enormously in wealth, mobility, and striking power by their increased use of camels, hitherto rarely domesti-



cated in north Arabia. Therefore in the two centuries after 1100 they were able to drive the Assyrians back to the walls of Ashur itself, while in the south their kindred, the Chaldeans, infiltrated Babylonia about 900 and conquered it in the centuries following.

Nowhere through the arc of the Mediterranean coast from Greece to Egypt, or through the arc of the Fertile Crescent from Palestine to Babylonia, was the change uniform. Each little city and each little band of invaders was a law to itself. In this valley the city would hold out; in the next, it would be destroyed; in the third, invaders and city dwellers would live for a time side by side. In Palestine as in Greece, in Mesopotamia as along the coasts of Anatolia, what we find by the year 1000 is a patchwork. One city or tribe might temporarily conquer its neighbors and enjoy a few decades of more extensive rule, but such exceptions did not alter the overall picture. Even in Egypt fragmentation prevailed. Occasionally the pharaonic tradition enabled a ruler to reunite the country; more often it enabled one to secure nominal recognition by local, really independent rulers; but most often the land was dismembered by mutually hostile princes, priests, and leaders of military clans. Assyria too, though it regained control of the neighboring territories in the late 900's and began a policy of expansion to secure the trade routes along the Tigris and across northern Mesopotamia, was in reality no exception to the particularism of

the time In a world of warring cities and tribes, the Assyrians were the most warlike. Consequently whenever they were at peace with themselves they could overrun their smaller neighbors, who could oppose them with only makeshift alliances. But the particularism which made possible Assyria's conquests prevented it from assimilating the cities and tribes it conquered. It could only collect booty, impose tribute, and appoint puppet rulers from and for the conquered peoples. As soon as the Assyrian armies were withdrawn the peoples were ready for revolt, the puppets had either to lead the revolts or be overthrown. Then the Assyrians would return. They used dreadful punishments to discourage revolts. But pillars of skulls erected in front of rebellious towns, captives impaled on stakes around the fortifications, prisoners burned alive and variously mutilated, failed to perpetuate submission. Thus the political history from 1150 to 750 remains essentially one of petty states, without major governmental developments. And even when the Assyrians developed a more coherent imperial organization after 750, the petty state remained the most stable form of ancient society. As a Greek poet said after the ultimate fall of Assyria, "A little city on a crag that lives in good order is stronger than the folly of Nineveh."

Culturally, however, these four centuries show both general advance and a number of important achievements by particular peoples. The general advance was the rebuilding of civilization after the barbarian invasions. In Greece and the Greek islands, in Asia Minor and coastal Syria (except for the Phoenician cities), in Palestine and many places along the Fertile Crescent, even the art of writing had been lost, almost all large buildings had been destroyed, houses had been replaced by huts. The pottery had steadily declined in technical skill without introduction of radically new forms—a change which suggests that the invaders had no forms of their own to introduce. There must have been an enormous destruction of tools and other artifacts, animals, men, and especially men with the skills to replace what had been destroyed. The replacement therefore required the slow civilization of the barbarians, which was the great achievement of these centuries. But the new civilization differed widely from the old.

The traditions of the new peoples perpetuated the ideals of their former barbarism; in literary terms, they were "heroic." They reflected, not the hierarchy of the Bronze Age imperial administrations, but the world of the invaders, in which a man's standing depended mostly on his own abilities. The pharaohs, high priests, and scribes of the former civilization were replaced by the warriors who stormed their cities, the sheiks who pastured their flocks along the edge of the Fertile Crescent, the prophets who led their tribes in desert wanderings and local wars. This primitive society admired especially stature and strength (Samson, Ajax), the physical

beauty of men (Absalom, Achilles), masculine friendship (David, Patroclus), skill in deception (Jacob, Odysseus), hospitality to strangers (Abraham, Menelaus), wisdom in dealing with men rather than book learning (Nestor, the older stories of Solomon), and, above all, the friendship and personal guidance of a god (Moses, Odysseus). With a reasonable share of these good things a man could do well in life—acquire property, a wife, and children, die at a ripe old age, and be given a magnificent funeral. These were the legitimate goals of human endeavor.

During the years from 1100 to 750 this heroic ideal must have been embodied in many poems and legends. Of these we have only two incomplete collections—the Homeric poems and the early material contained (with many later additions) in the books of the Old Testament from Genesis through II Kings. The histories of both these collections are matters of such dispute about many points that it is difficult to determine even “the common opinion.” The following account, however, is defensible.

The Homeric poems—the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—were put into much their present forms in Ionic territory during the eighth century. They incorporate earlier elements of various dates, but have not been much interpolated and therefore present us with a relatively uniform body of the literature which was sung for entertainment in the courts of the petty kings and the festivals of the little towns of the Ionian Greeks during the years from 1150 to 750. Unfortunately, both poems deal chiefly with minor elements of the story of Troy (destroyed about 1230) and therefore offer little direct information about the later history of Greece.

The material collected in Genesis to II Kings did not reach its present form until the end of the fifth century. Beside the legends, the collection contains fragments of law codes, historical works, imaginative literary compositions (notably the Joseph romance), borrowings early and late from Mesopotamian mythology, and many minor elements. Most of these have been worked over by three or four editors and cemented and augmented by editorial inventions. The collection now begins with the creation of the world, which it dates about 4000 B.C., and contains a history of mankind from creation to the building of “the tower” of Babel, a genealogy of the Semites from the flood to Abraham, and finally a history of Abraham and his descendants down to 560 B.C. Of the elements which here concern us, the legends, there are six main groups: those dealing with the early history of mankind, the patriarchs, Moses, the “judges,” Saul and David, and the prophets. Almost no one now claims historical value for the creation stories and their like. The “essential historicity” of the legends about Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is still defended by determined believers, but a stronger case can be made for the view that these were legends about

the founders of Palestinian shrines whom the Israelites, after their conquest of Palestine, adopted as ancestors. Jacob's children had to be driven by famine into Egypt so that the Israelites, arriving from Egypt "470 years" later, could be represented as his descendants. (Similarly, the children of Hercules had to be banished from the Peloponnese so that they could lead the later Dorian invasion.) Once Jacob and his children have settled in Egypt the Old Testament knows practically nothing of their stay—a clear indication that there was no continuous tradition connecting the pretended "patriarchal period" of the 1700's with the exodus, which by Biblical chronology would have to be dated in the first half of the thirteenth century.

At this point a new cycle of legends begins. Its hero is Moses, a prophet of the god YHWH (probably "Yahweh")—a god unknown to the patriarchs (Exod. 6.3). From here on the tradition seems to be mainly Israelite in origin and, in outline, historical. The details, however, are fantastic; not only minor episodes but major ones like the covenant at Sinai may have been invented to provide Israelite origins for Canaanite ceremonies. (The covenant is to obey the law, said to be "the law of Yahweh"; but a desert deity is not a likely legislator, and the law now attached to the story is certainly descended, although remotely, from Canaanite material.) For "historical outline," thus, not much is left save that some Israelites escaped from Egypt under Moses, picked up adherents in the wilderness, fought off attacks by other tribes, were driven out of southern Palestine, and eventually conquered the western edge of Transjordan, where Moses died. The historical connection of Moses with Joshua is uncertain, and the legends of the Joshua cycle have suffered badly from later accretion and invention; they contradict both the archaeological evidence and each other.

But the Israelites did establish themselves in Palestine during the thirteenth century. For two centuries thereafter they fought with neighbors and rival invaders; legends from several tribes about the heroes of these local wars have been collected and elaborated in the book called Judges. Eventually central Palestine was subjugated briefly by the Philistines. A new cycle of legends told of the resistance to them, first under Saul and his son Jonathan, whom the Philistines eventually killed, then under David, who with his band of "mighty men" (at first fellow outlaws, later mercenaries) captured Jerusalem, made it his capital, and about the year 1000 created a sizable kingdom in Palestine and Transjordan. (Significantly, in his time heroic legend is displaced as the main element of the Biblical account by historical narrative, though popular imagination continued to produce heroic legends about both the kings and the wandering prophets of Yahweh, and later compilers made use of these.) Solomon, David's son, squeezed enough out of his father's kingdom to build in Jerusalem a palace

for himself and a temple for Yahweh, to fortify some strategic cities, and to maintain a luxurious court. At his death, about 925, the northern Israelite tribes understandably revolted and set up a separate kingdom. Presently the subject peoples also revolted and the area returned to the pattern of petty tribal states characteristic of the age.

We have described the Israelite legends because of their importance for medieval and modern thought. From A.D. 391, when Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, until 1859, when the credibility of the creation story was destroyed by Darwin, the Old Testament was the official authority for ancient history. Before the triumph of Christianity a similar, though less official, authority was enjoyed throughout the Greco-Roman world by the Homeric poems, which became the basic texts of elementary and secondary education. At first, however, both in Israel and in Greece, the legends were less important as accounts of past events than as portraits of ideal figures and adventures, which influenced the life of the new age.

The theater of this life was the city. As tribes settled down their territories broke up into city-states, only poor grazing lands remained tribal. Within the tiny area of the city-state, the city itself was infinitesimal, often no more than a couple of hundred yards from wall to wall. It was usually ruled by a hereditary king, who was the leader in war, the judge in peace, and the high priest at all times. This economy in administration was dictated by poverty as well as tribal tradition. Trade was negligible and confined to luxuries. The city lived on what it could grow in its fields, supplemented by fishing and hunting. Agriculture, however, was primitive, half the land was left fallow every year to prevent its exhaustion. The plants available for cultivation were little removed from their wild forms and yielded meager harvests. Consequently, given the small size of the city's territory, there was almost no surplus to support unproductive labor. Large priesthoods were out of the question. The new culture was at first spared their conservative economic, political, and cultural influence. Temples, too, were luxuries rarely possible. No large ones appear in Greece until the eighth century. In Israel, David's military success made possible Solomon's buildings, but their cost led to revolt.

Poverty also delayed the development of specialists. The ideal man, like the small farmer, could do everything for himself: the tradition pictured Odysseus, king of Ithaca, building his own house; Saul leaving his plow to lead an army. But some specialists there were. Divination, thought to result from possession by a spirit, was always a specialty of persons psychologically liable to such seizures. Another specialty was that of the metalworkers. Their secret craft was now more important because it included more feasible ways of working iron. Iron increased the productive

capacity of the workers, and with better tools the craftsman became an object of more value and more political importance, especially since he was part of a small political unit, a city or a tribe, to which the gain or loss of a single skilled man was important. Concern for the individual is consequently one of the most important characteristics of the Homeric poems, the legends of the Old Testament, and the Western civilization which derives from them.

On the other hand, because the typical city-state was so small, everyone in it was aware of all the details of the life of his neighbors. The clearing house for gossip was the gate of the city. Here sat the old men of the city, the heads of the principal families, who were both the king's council and the local archives. To make a contract or record a sale, one "declared before those who sat in the gate." In such a small society, reputation became a matter of life and death. Acute concern for honor is characteristic of heroic legend. To revenge an insult, Achilles would imperil the whole Greek army; David, for the same reason, was ready to wipe out the household of Nabal, man, woman, and child (I Sam. 25.34). This concern for honor was an important motive for achievement—for bravery in warfare, but also for skill in speaking (the public assembly is, for Homer, "where men get honor"), and for skill in any kind of craft, even the humble arts of domestic service (Odyssey XV.320). Since the city needed the work of every man and woman, it praised or blamed each one according to the quality of his work. The slacker could not escape censure, nor the incompetent, worse than censure, ridicule.

Therefore, during the years from 1100 to 750 the cultural level of the newly occupied areas steadily rose. Poverty remained general, but when the political configuration changed momentarily, permitting a ruler to draw income from a larger area, sufficient wealth could be raised to finance monumental building and works of art. The greatest examples of these are the palaces of the Assyrian kings, which contained a new style of historical art—low reliefs of exquisite clarity narrating the rulers' triumphs. The figures of these reliefs are often masterpieces, combining stylized treatment with vivid, lifelike effect. The tradition thus established was continued to the end of the Assyrian empire in 612, and as the palace art of the greatest military power and wealthiest court of the age, it exerted a wide influence. The great reliefs were too costly to be directly imitated by lesser states, but their details and their vigorous treatment of animal figures were copied on minor works of art all around the Mediterranean.

In Greece and Phoenicia, hemmed in by mountains and warlike neighbors, the city-states turned to the sea to supplement their incomes. Here the arts were the handmaidens of commerce—in Greece, metalworking and pottery, in Phoenicia, ivory carving, silverwork, and the manufac-

ture of colored glass and fine fabrics, especially admired for the "Tyrian purple" dye. Besides these luxury products, slaves (who could be kidnapped along the way), ores, and smelted metal in ingots came to be staples in this trade which gradually increased. Piracy and exploration went hand in hand with commerce. The Phoenicians sailed south to Egypt, thence west along the African coast, and finally through the Straits of Gibraltar to the Atlantic coasts of Africa and Spain. The Greeks in the west sailed along the Balkan coast, thence to Italy and Sicily, in the east they penetrated the Black Sea and discovered the Russian rivers. Neither Greeks nor Phoenicians kept out of each other's territories. Homer sings of Greek voyages to Egypt and of Phoenician traders in the Aegean. Several cities in Greece claimed Phoenician founders. Cyprus, where the copper mines were still important, kept its Mycenaean settlements and received new settlers from Phoenicia.

The Phoenician traders carried their alphabet wherever they ventured. To the traders the alphabet was merely a convenience for keeping records, but it was to become the shaping instrument of the literature, the learning, and the science of the Western world. Nor was it alone. Mesopotamian weights and measures and techniques of divination, the lunisolar calendar, and a host of decorative motifs and artistic and architectural techniques were taken over by the Greeks and contributed to the rapid growth of Greek civilization.

But this growth cannot be explained solely by Oriental influences or economic opportunities. A most important factor was the peculiar genius of the Greeks. As examples of this, let two characteristics of Greek culture suffice—the language and the love of beauty. Among the languages of the ancient world Greek is outstanding for its wealth of means to express *precisely* the relations between the subjects discussed. Where other languages simply string together clauses, at most with a few all-purpose conjunctions, Greek always makes possible, and often requires, a clear, detailed analysis of the whole complex of ideas which is to be expressed. A page written in some Semitic language, or in early Latin, is to a page of classical Greek as a brick pile is to an arch. And along with this amazing sense for linguistic and intellectual structure, the Greeks had an equally amazing sense for visible beauty, particularly that of the human body. If a sinner is a beautiful man, says Plutarch, the gods deal gently with him. When the Hebrews said that God, on viewing creation, saw that it was *good*, the Septuagint translators—though they tried to translate literally—felt compelled to say, "he saw that it was *beautiful*." Little as they knew of Greek, they knew that "beautiful," not "good," was the common term of approval. The attitude lasted down to Christian times and spread, with Greek culture, throughout the Roman empire. Both Augustine and Gregory

of Nyssa, consciously rejecting Greco-Roman values, argue that Jesus must have been ugly or the crowd would not have ill-treated him. No other literature of the ancient world even remotely approaches Greek in feeling for physical beauty and in intellectual structure. With these peculiar gifts, the Greeks set out on their course.

For Further Reading

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13 The Great Divide

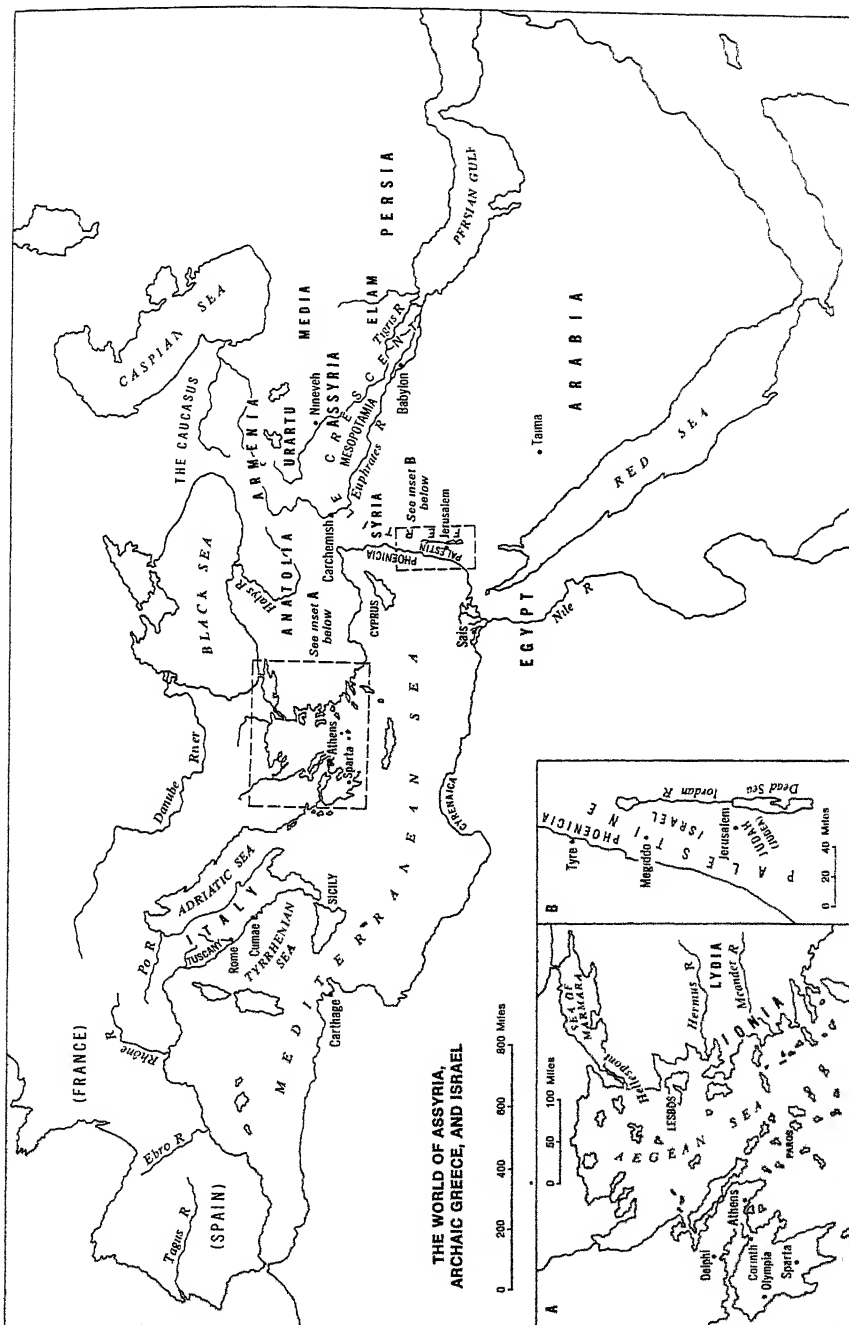
The accumulation of men and belongings during the years from 1100 to 750 was neither uniform nor uninterrupted. The Assyrian conquests, in particular, had so gutted northern Syria that it remained unimportant during the next four hundred years. Everywhere, the rate of progress had been retarded by endemic wars between neighboring cities or tribes. These wars had their root in poverty and were primarily fought for control of land since, given the size of the cities' territories and their total dependence on local agriculture, even a small strip of land could make a large difference in diet. The wars left grudges, perpetuated the heroic ideal which led to war as a means to honor, and perpetuated poverty which led to war as a form of honorable theft.

But these wars were not very destructive—the Assyrian achievements were unique. Most buildings were of stone, fire only burned off the roofs. Killing, like everything else, had to be done by hand; therefore mortality was usually low. Nobody knew much about siege warfare (except, again, the Assyrians, who developed a good battering ram as early as the ninth century). The soldiers were farmers who had to get back to put their fields in shape for planting before the autumn rains fell, so victors had little time to do damage. Consequently, in spite of wars, the period from 1150 to 750 saw a great increase of population and wealth, and these brought with them diversification of culture.

Previously, small cities and tribal kingdoms were alike made up of

Dates ending in zero are approximate.

- B C.
- 780 Alphabetic writing begins in Greece (Phoenician alphabet)
 - 776 Traditional date for the beginning of the Olympic games
 - 760 First Greek colony on the Italian mainland (Cumae)
 - 750 Large temples begin to be built in Greece; Amos' denunciation of the rich, Yahweh a god of justice
 - 750-700 The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* reach approximately their present forms
 - 744 Accession of Tiglath-pileser III, reorganization of the Assyrian army and empire, beginning of the great century of Assyrian conquests, building, and historical art
 - 740 Hosea's denunciation of the Israelites for their worship of gods other than Yahweh
 - 722 Assyria destroys the kingdom of Israel
 - 714 Sargon II of Assyria reduces Urartu
 - 710 Sargon takes Babylon
 - 700 Hesiod denounces the rich, Zeus a god of justice; development of hoplite tactics in Greece; monarchies in Greece giving way to oligarchies
 - 690 Cimmerian invasion of Asia Minor
 - 680 Scythian invasion of Armenia
 - 672 Esarhaddon of Assyria controls western Media
 - 671 Esarhaddon takes Egypt
 - 663 Ashurbanipal of Assyria resubjugates Egypt
 - 646 Ashurbanipal conquers Elam



large families, not to say clans. The heads of these families were the king's influential advisers, whether or not they were called "the royal council." When quarrels arose, opponents could not easily be eliminated—they were too important to the state, nor could their power be broken and the victor's power greatly increased by economic reprisals—there was too little property to make much difference. With wealth came the possibility of decisive change. When the city had men enough, opponents could be exiled; when it had wealth enough, the victor could use their property to hire supporters and make his victory permanent. Therefore, both in the Near East and in Greece, the political patterns changed as one side or the other, the king or the council, gained the advantage.

The changes were uniform throughout large areas. In Greece the councils won; the kings were reduced to officials; the government became an oligarchy. In Anatolia outside the Greek cities, in Cyprus, Syria, Palestine, and the Fertile Crescent, the kings became absolute, the heads of the families lost their conciliar rank, and the royal council came to be made up of the king's great officers, appointed by him and often of no distinguished ancestry. No doubt the monarchic tradition of the Near East was influential in this development. It is dangerous to talk of ethnic tradition or character. The Greek cities of Cyprus became kingdoms on the Near Eastern model, as did the Phoenician coastal cities, but Carthage, equally Phoenician, became an oligarchy on Greek lines.

One important factor in the Greek development was the discovery of a new military technique, the use of a solid line of heavily armed spearmen (hoplites). The success of this technique in Greece, a rugged country ideal for light infantry armed with bows, is a mystery. But succeed it did; it saved Greece from Near Eastern domination and later enabled the Greeks to conquer the Near Eastern world and impose their culture on it. Greek art, literature, and philosophy could be produced, preserved, and propagated only because the Greeks made themselves individually the best soldiers and collectively the greatest military power of their age.

Their new technique, developing about 700, required men who could afford full armor and time for practice. So the wealthy men and their sons became the cities' crack regiments. No Greek city king could afford a hoplite force of his own; that required a large taxable area for its support. The fragmentation of Greece by rugged mountains, which made it difficult for a state to expand, was thus a factor in the triumph of the oligarchies. In the Near East, perhaps because the land was less fragmented, the kingdoms grew larger and the kings could afford mercenaries and so became absolute rulers.

This political differentiation accompanied a sharp cultural change. The Greek oligarchs were united in military cliques whose members had to

hang together to preserve their military efficiency. Brought up on the heroic poems, they were intensely concerned about honor. So they had to govern by mutual consent; it became customary to pass the city offices around, by election, from one leading family to another. Hence in every city grew up both the custom of elections and a set of conventions as to what should and should not be done—an unwritten constitution. This is the background of later Greek constitutional law, almost unparalleled in the Near East.

Concern for honor and, even more, for wealth and mutual protection led the oligarchs to marry women from the ruling families of other cities. Consequently the ruling families became an international clique. The members of this clique gathered to see their in-laws and display their wealth at the festivals of the great religious centers. Most centers had cults of local heroes who were thought to protect the land and assure its fertility. The cult of these heroes commonly involved military and athletic contests, the Greeks were outstanding among the peoples of the ancient world for their love of athletics. In 776, we are told, the athletic and military games for the festival of Zeus at Olympia in the western Peloponnese were organized as a Panhellenic contest, recurrent every fourth year. Soon victory in these games became one of the highest honors of the Greek world. Other religious centers followed suit. Song and dancing were parts of the worship of the Greek gods. Contests in music and poetry were held at the shrine of Apollo in Delphi. Civic festivals with "games" were similarly developed, notably the festival of Athena at Athens. And all these contests were means of gaining honor.

Athletic and military concern alike focused attention on the male body. Since every citizen from twenty to forty-nine, if not a cripple, was liable to military duty and would have to stand in combat every few years, most cities prescribed athletic training as a form of military preparedness. A fine body was a means to honor and a source of pride. The Dorians, the most warlike of the Greeks, expressed their pride by exercising naked. Soon the gymnasium, "the place where men go naked," became throughout Greece the center in which upper-class citizens passed their leisure time. Male nudity became a major concern of Greek art. By putting a premium on exercise and consequent bathing, it made the Greeks the longest-lived people of their times. In the gymnasium, too, arose the discussions from which philosophy and political theory would grow, as well as the friendships which rapidly became homosexual love affairs. Homosexuality occurs all over the world; Greece was unusual in honoring it. Even in Greece, however, there were limits; homosexual intercourse commonly remained illegal. But the law was not enforced, and in many Greek cities the lover came to have a recognized part in the boy's education. He was the model and the guide who introduced the boy to the world of men. (Homosexual-

ity between adults was thought ridiculous) These developments did not occur in the Near East, where games were for children, singing and dancing were the work of professional entertainers, nudity was a disgrace, and homosexuality was a capital crime

Homosexuality restricted population growth. This may have been one of the reasons for its popularity in Greece, where the tiny, infertile valleys were already overpopulated. But neither homosexuality nor the practice of abandoning unwanted babies could check population growth. Overcrowding led to emigration, both by individuals and in colonies, now possible because the cities had enough wealth to finance them. When a city chronically short of food wished to send out a colony, it would usually consult Apollo of Delphi. With his approval and prudently obscure advice, a leader and lawmaker would be appointed from one of the city's distinguished families, ships provided, and a body of colonists made up; sometimes even outsiders would be invited to participate. Choice of the location might be guided by the god—whose priests heard the reports of pilgrims from all parts of the world—and the advice of traders.

Before 750 there was a Greek colony at Cumae (north of Naples), and by 550 colonies were thick around south and southwest Italy, Sicily (except for the western, Phoenician tip), south France and east Spain, the north shore of the Aegean, the Hellespont, Sea of Marmora, and Black Sea, and the promontory of Cyrenaica on the north African coast. They vastly expanded the markets of Greece. They imported manufactured articles, wine, and olive oil; and they supplied raw materials—metals, grain, wood, tar, salt, fish, hides, and slaves. By relieving the population pressure and stimulating economic growth they made possible the glorious cultural achievements of Greece. Colonization also made the Greeks aware of the great world, with its infinite variety of peoples and customs—whence philosophic problems as to right and wrong. It confronted them with many different environments, it stimulated their adaptability, it developed their practical intelligence. The necessity of founding cities trained their founders in urban and in social planning. It made them legislators—and philosophers. Plato's *Republic* reflects the experience of colonization. The colonies were a frontier from which the Greeks derived an awareness of new possibilities, a willingness to experiment, and a "philosophic" detachment from established customs and ideas. These developments were not paralleled in the Near East.

Oligarchy, military tactics, athletics, homosexuality, colonization, and consequent intellectual attitude—Greece between 750 and 650 distinguished itself from the context of the eastern Mediterranean world. There, absolute monarchies reigned, supported by mercenary armies and ruling through councils composed not of men of wealth and stature but of royal

appointees in charge of the branches of the government—the mercenaries, the *corvée*, the secretariat, the palace, and so on. With this return toward the ancient Near Eastern type of monarchy went related developments. The growth of royal power and income made possible a growth of professional clergy. In spite of the alphabet, the scribal class lived on as royal secretaries and administrators. As their efficiency (in tax collection) and the luxury of the courts increased, the small farmers were squeezed harder. Their reaction can be heard in the denunciations of the rich by the Israelite Amos, a prophet of Yahweh, convinced that his god was about to destroy the oppressors of the poor.

That Amos' prophecies have survived is surprising. For the most part we know of ancient history only from the upper classes—it was they who ordered the inscriptions and wrote the books. When, occasionally, we hear a lower-class comment it is thanks to quotation by a wealthy author or to a chance discovery of some poor man's papyri containing what the rich would not copy. But Amos owes his preservation to a different sort of accident.

The Israelites seem to have learned from Moses the worship of a god named Yahweh, a desert divinity, good in razzias, but no farmer. Consequently, in Palestine they began to worship the gods of the land, a family of fertility deities known from Ugarit—Father El and Mother Ashera, with their children Baal and Anath, Baal ("husband, master, owner") being the most popular. But this produced a reaction. Whether it came from the upper class of the invaders who may have wanted, for military purposes, to keep their followers separate from the Canaanites, or from the lower, who may have wanted to keep themselves distinct from the peasantry, whether it expressed the revulsion of the temperate desert people from the drunken Palestinian fertility rites, or the jealousy of the prophets of Yahweh at their new competitors, at all events, the claim was made that all Israelites were obligated to worship Yahweh and *only* Yahweh. They were his people, his "private property"; to worship any other god was an offense against him.

Just when this notion arose is uncertain because the later editors of the Old Testament have constantly written it into the early stories. Here our concern is not with its origin, but with its acceptance in the historical period. We first hear of royal action against the worshipers of gods other than Yahweh in the reign of Solomon's great-grandson Asa (913–873?). By the middle of the ninth century there was an active "Yahweh-alone" party of prophets led by Elijah and Elisha. The party is credited with having inspired a revolution in the northern Israelite kingdom about 840. Shortly thereafter the priest of the temple of Yahweh in Jerusalem organized a revolution there. But the movement was not able to impose its will on the country as a whole; indeed, it soon lost control even of the courts.

As a minority, it then turned to the discontented for support—hence its adoption of the works of Amos, who probably had not been part of it. Had he thought the worship of other gods important he would have given the practice a more prominent place in his list of the sins which Yahweh will punish. How party members felt on the subject can be seen in the tirades of Amos' successor, Hosea (about 740). For him, Israel was wedded to Yahweh; to worship other gods was to commit adultery. With Micah and Isaiah at the end of the eighth century, the themes of Amos and Hosea are fused and the principal traits in the party's picture of Yahweh are thenceforth fixed. He is a jealous god, who will not tolerate his peoples' worship of any other divinity, and he is a just god, who is particularly concerned to protect the poor.

The same concern for justice appears half a century later (c. 700) in Greek literature. As Yahweh called the shepherd Amos to prophesy, so the Muses told the shepherd Hesiod to sing of the things to come, and those that had been, and of the eternal gods. Hesiod's attempt to organize genealogically the Greek myths about deities gave classical status to a lot of material which wasted the time of Greek theologians to the end of paganism. At least the worshippers of Yahweh alone were spared this. Hating all other gods, they cut down mythology to stories of creation and of Yahweh's interventions on earth. But Hesiod and Amos agreed about the deity's present role in human society. Zeus, like Yahweh, was the ruler of the world and the god of justice; he punished the wicked, the unjust, and the oppressors of the poor. Amos was more concerned about justice *for the poor*, Hesiod, about justice. Amos expected the immediate destruction of Israel. Hesiod thought that men were going from bad to worse and would eventually be destroyed, but that meanwhile the righteous would be rewarded by peace and plentiful harvests, the wicked would be visited by plague, famine, and the disasters of war. The genuine prophecies of Amos were predictions of doom, but Hesiod offered practical advice: the wise man will be a careful farmer, so that he can afford to be just; the rules for farming follow. This explains why his work was preserved and why it gives us an invaluable picture of Greek village life. But his concern for justice places Hesiod's book beside the prophecies of Amos, not only in the intellectual and moral history of that time, but in the history of Western civilization.

These theological developments, and everything else in the Near East, were overshadowed by the revival of Assyria. Tiglath-pileser III, who seized the throne in 744, transformed the old kingdom into an empire. Instead of merely looting territories and leaving them under native rulers to rebel, he made frequent use of the practice, hitherto rare, of deporting part of a conquered people and replacing them with others, thereby split-

ting the territory politically. He cut territories into small provinces, usually under foreign governors. He built up a standing army to support these governors, no longer relying on a peasantry that would have to get back to their farms. Full-time professional troops drawn from many peoples formed a military machine able to survive the loss of Assyria itself. Thus, though the new Assyria was still unable to win over the peoples it conquered, it was able to split them up and to enlist some of their members in its service.

With this power Tiglath-pileser III resumed the Assyrian program of conquest—south to Babylon, north to Urartu, east to Media, and west to the Mediterranean. His successors pushed it farther than ever before. They destroyed the northern kingdom of Israel in 722, reduced Urartu to unimportance in 714, and recaptured Babylon in 710; Esarhaddon extended Assyrian control into Media before 672 and into Egypt in 671; Ashurbanipal resubjugated Egypt in 663, and pushed beyond Babylon to subdue Elam about 646.

With military expansion went an enormous expansion of wealth. The brilliant tradition of Assyrian art was resumed, with increasing naturalism, in pictures of military campaigns and court ceremonies. A library of 1,200 tablets of cuneiform texts, collected at Ashurbanipal's orders, preserved most of what we know about ancient Near Eastern literature—a dismal picture. The largest group of texts are interpretations of acts thought ominous; the next largest, dictionaries—so cumbersome was cuneiform writing; and the third, magic spells. The few literary texts are not Assyrian compositions, but copies of older ones. From royal correspondence, historical inscriptions, and treaties we see a different sort of mind—vigorous and matter-of-fact. But the aristocracy was a small group occupied by war, administration, and trade. Their educational tradition was dominated by the study of classical texts notable for their linguistic difficulty and their intellectual poverty. Hence, no doubt, the paradox of Assyrian civilization—the contrast between its magnificent achievements in art and architecture, military technique and organization, and its utter literary insignificance.

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14 The Century of the Minor Powers

To meet the threat of the new Assyrian empire, traditional enemies united—for instance, the Israelites, the Phoenician cities, and the Aramean kingdom of Damascus. Such local leagues were unsuccessful. Next came what may be called national states among ethnic groups threatened by Assyria, like Egypt, Babylonia, and Media. In Egypt the Assyrians helped by killing off the local rulers except for one, Necho, whom they chose as their agent. Thus Necho's son, Psammetichos I, could eventually unify the country in the 650's. The Assyrians also cleared the way for union of the Median tribes in the 650's and of southern Mesopotamia by the Chaldean kingdom of Babylon about 625. Also the Assyrian defeat of the Cimmerians about 640 enabled the kingdom of Lydia to expand into central Anatolia. These kingdoms allied against Assyria and fomented rebellions among Assyria's subjects. Moreover, a new horde of nomads, the Scythians, had come through the Caucasus in the 680's and thereafter threatened Assyria from the north. Nineveh, the greatest Assyrian city, fell to the Medes and Babylonians in 612. The Assyrian army was broken up in 609. The Scythians were eventually—in the 590's—driven back into Russia by the Medes. By 585 the Near East was divided into four kingdoms, the Lydians controlling western and central Anatolia to the Halys; the Medes, everything from central Anatolia through the mountains around the Tigris Valley to southern Persia; the Babylonians, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Palestine. The fourth kingdom was Egypt.

All these kingdoms were absolute monarchies. The king's power rested on his control of the army but also, now, on ethnic feeling. Of the Medes we know almost nothing. The Lydian and eastern Greek cultures were closely related, but not identical. To the Greeks the Lydians represented Oriental luxury. Some important cultural innovations, notably coinage, are said to have come from Lydia. In Egypt and Babylon ancient traditions were revived, ancient works of literature copied, and new works of art created, following the fashions of ancient monuments, but displaying a new technical skill and calculated simplicity. In particular, the Saite art of Egypt (so called from the new capital, Sais, in the Delta) produced among its many masterpieces a series of heads which show the first true portraiture since the Amarna Age.

The new Mediterranean states imitated the fashions of the Near East. The lions, rosettes, and palmettes of Assyrian and Phoenician decoration

Dates ending in zero are approximate.

- B C. 650 Egypt united under Psammetichos I; Media united in reaction to Assyrian pressure, Archilochus of Paros, lyric poet
- 646 Ashurbanipal's conquest of Elam, Lydians begin coinage
- 640 Assyrian defeat of Cimmerians opens central Asia Minor for Lydian expansion
- 625 Rise of the Chaldean kingdom of Babylon
- 621 The Deuteronomic law code found in the Jerusalem temple; King Josiah's religious reforms; publication of the laws of Athens by Draco
- 612 Nineveh falls to the Medes and Babylonians
- 609 Necho II of Egypt conquers Palestine-Syria; Battle of Megiddo, death of Josiah
- 605 Battle of Carchemish; Egyptians, defeated by Babylonians, retreat to Egypt
- 600 Circumnavigation of Africa by Phoenicians; Sappho of Lesbos, first famous authoress; Corinthian pottery predominant in Greek trade; Greek monumental sculpture begins
- 593 Solon's reforms in Athens
- 590 Scythians driven out of Armenia by the Medes
- 587 Destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar II of Babylon; the prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel
- 585 Battle between the Medes and the Lydians for control of central Asia Minor, the Halys fixed as boundary
- 560 Pisistratus tyrant of Athens; Athenian black-figure pottery becomes the most popular Greek ware
- 550 Cyrus of Persia gains control of Media
- 540 "Second Isaiah," author of Isaiah 40-55, denies the existence of gods other than Yahweh

were perpetuated on the "Orientalizing" pottery of Corinth, popular all around the Mediterranean. Statues of Greek youths show Egyptian postures and wigs. The Etruscans, a mysterious people who gave their name to Tuscany (the region between Florence and Rome), incorporated so many Near Eastern elements in their art and religion that they were thought immigrants from Asia Minor, as perhaps their rulers were. The Etruscan kings grew rich from the copper and iron deposits of north Italy, their twelve cities ruled Tuscany, planted settlements in the Po Valley and controlled western Italy down to Cumae, their shipping gave its name to the Tyrrhenian Sea, and their trader-pirates were active even in the Aegean.

All these countries were much concerned with trade. Nebuchadnezzar II (604–562), the greatest of the kings of Babylon, besieged Tyre for thirteen years, hoping to control its far-reaching trade (described in Ezekiel 27). Nabonidus (555–539), the last of the Babylonian kings, established himself at Taima in the west Arabian desert to control the incense trade between south Arabia and the Mediterranean. (Incense, now fashionable as an offering to the gods, contributed enormously to the wealth of south Arabia, wealth which seems to have produced nothing worth mention.) The Saite pharaohs drew support from Greek mercenaries and merchants; a tyrant of Corinth named his son for Psammetichos. Necho II (609–594), Psammetichos' successor, tried to cut a canal from the Nile to the Red Sea, and sent a Phoenician fleet around Africa. The Lydians' invention of coinage is evidence of their economic interests; the wealth of the Lydian kings was fabulous—"as rich as Croesus." And the Greeks now rivaled the Phoenicians as the principal carriers of the Mediterranean.

Trade both required and produced both markets and goods. Markets were found in the growing colonies and the swelling populations of the old countries. Goods were supplied by increased agriculture, mining, and manufacturing. Corinth, with its florid pottery and metalwork, became a great city. Phoenician glass, dyed fabrics, and ivory, Arabian perfumes, Egyptian linens and faience, amulets and papyrus scrolls, were money-making luxuries. Slaves and metals remained major cargoes, though wine and oil perhaps took first place, and there was even shipping enough for trade in grain.

Profits from commerce and manufacturing produced a new rich class, distinct from the old, landed, oligarchic families, and jealous of the oligarchs' control of the government. But the increase of wealth also produced a new poor. Wealth could be lent. Money made lending easier, especially when, in sixth-century Greece, coins of small denominations were introduced. High rates of interest led to default, seizure of the debtor's land, and enslavement. Slavery meant competition for the artisan

and the small farmer. As colonization fell off after 600, when the best places had been taken, the cities filled up with dispossessed and embittered men. A further cause for bitterness was injustice: the law, traditional and unwritten, could be shaped by the judges in favor of their fellow oligarchs. Therefore the late seventh century saw in Athens and Israel, and presumably elsewhere, the promulgation of written law codes.

Where law codes did not satisfy, the poor found leaders—men from the new rich or mavericks from the oligarchy—eager to overthrow the oligarchs and rule alone. Such a sole ruler the Greeks called a “tyrant.” The word originally was not pejorative, but rapidly became so in the upper-class literature. Tyrants usually expropriated the property of their opponents, giving some to the poor, but more to their mercenaries and friends. They also used the money of the rich for public buildings (which provided employment) and for religious festivals and games. They were therefore popular. The oligarchs who escaped found support in the neighboring cities, normally hostile and glad to make trouble. Hence came attempts at counterrevolution which led to new murders, flights, and counterplots. Either counterrevolution or the initial threat of revolution might lead to an absolute ruler who represented the interests of the rich, but who would equally—*qua* absolute—be called a “tyrant.” These developments, frequent in Greece, were not unparalleled elsewhere, for instance in the careers of Amasis of Egypt (568–526) and Nabonidus of Babylon (555–539).

Tyranny was the extreme example of the breakdown of standards, now everywhere evident. Here again the Greeks were the leaders and produced the most striking cases. Before 650, the poet Archilochus of Paros sang of his escape from battle at the cost of abandoning his shield—by traditional standards the ultimate disgrace. His poems set a fashion among poets, if not soldiers. The Greeks are the first people to produce individuals who are not afraid of going counter to common opinion not because of some supposed revelation, but just because they want to, *and* of celebrating the fact. This new, open defiance of laws and standards reflects the diffusion of authority in Greek society, where every city made its own laws and individuals could move freely from one to another. But the change was not limited to Greece. Everywhere trade and travel sophisticated the travelers and shocked the stay-at-homes; to every country came aliens with outlandish ways and opinions. These aliens were “impure”—since they did not observe the local purity laws—and might pollute others. So all around the Mediterranean we now find an increase of concern about “purity,” a matter hitherto taken for granted. Apollo at Delphi was kept busy prescribing purifications, and Greece swarmed with less authoritative purifiers, many claiming to use the spells of the legendary Orpheus. Entire cities

were "purified." among them Athens. In Babylonia, the Judeans, deported from Jerusalem in 597 and later, were exposed to all sorts of impure contacts. Therefore Ezekiel was a fanatic about impurity, to which he gave far more space than any previous prophet. The priestly lawmakers of his time were also more concerned with it than were the earlier legislators. But it is clear from Ezekiel's polemics and from the mixture of Judean and Babylonian names in later business documents that many Judeans were neglecting their purity rules, breaking away from their communities, and becoming unattached individuals.

In Greece this growth of individualism produced a new literature—personal lyric poetry. Lyrics, anonymous, and often intended for use in rituals, had hitherto been concerned with common experiences. Now, along the Ionian coast, appear poets who tell us their names and sing of themselves, their particular political contests and military adventures, their travels and homesickness, poverty and drinking parties, hates and loves. No earlier literature exists in which love plays so large a part. Significantly, the greatest of the new love poets, Sappho of Lesbos (c. 600) is the first woman to become famous as a writer. Love is the easiest adventure for the individualist, and for the respectable woman, in this period, it was the *one* adventure. She was shut up in her home; that was her realm—she would be angry if her husband stayed home and meddled in her business. Accordingly, Sappho's poems celebrated that love between women which was the obverse of Greek male relationships.

With such eroticism and, for men, the related interest in athletics, goes the development of Greek sculpture and drawing, which reflect a tactile awareness of the musculature of the male body. The first major works of sculpture—beginning before 600—are statues of naked youths, many of them memorials of individuals. The nudity probably comes from athletics, for women are shown clothed. These statues were painted, but the colors, and the Greek sense of color, are lost to us. Other factors in the new art were delight in elaborate linear patterns, seen in Ionian statues, and an equal delight in simplicity, seen in the Doric temples of the following age.

Of these many changes—increase in population and trade, extension of a monetary economy, breakdown of standards, and development of individualism and of the arts—the political concomitants differed somewhat in each city. Generally, trading cities had tyrants early and often—as did Corinth and the big cities of the Ionian coast and Sicily. Many small, out-of-the-way places never had them: their oligarchs stayed in power. For later history the peculiar developments in Sparta and Athens were of greatest importance.

In Sparta the Dorian invaders, much taller than the other Greeks, made

the natives serfs (helots was the local word) They also conquered all the southern Peloponnese. With 600,000 acres of arable land, capable of supporting 30,000 warriors with their dependents and helots, they could afford to neglect colonization, keep their population at home, and become the greatest military power in Greece. Their worried neighbors backed a helot revolt in the mid-seventh century, which almost ruined the Spartans. Since they could not do without the helots, who did the agricultural work, they reorganized their state as a military camp. Helots were prohibited even from carrying their masters' weapons. (Aristotle remarked that those who carry the weapons decide the form of the government.) Citizens were forbidden to engage in agriculture or business; their lives were devoted to military duties. The most difficult but most important duty was the suppression of personality, for the decisive factor in battles now was the discipline of the hoplite line, in which every man must keep his assigned place and do exactly as ordered. To foster esprit de corps, boys were taken from home at twelve and brought up in troops, trained in military exercises, music (besides learning battle songs, they memorized and sang their laws), concern for what people thought of them, respect for elders, obedience, endurance, and silence. As youths they went into the secret police, to ferret out and murder potentially rebellious helots. As adults they went into the army. Luxuries were prohibited, domestic life reduced to a minimum; a soldier ate with his fellows in the mess hall. One visitor, after tasting the food, said, "Now I understand why the Spartans do not fear death." Rewards were honors which made life less comfortable: victors in the Olympic games were assigned to the front rank in battle. Sparta became a military machine devoted to perpetuating itself. The soldiers were buried in their red uniforms.

The rest of Greece admired Sparta, partly because of its military success, more because Spartan life was a training in "virtue" in the "good old-fashioned" sense, the sense inculcated in children by adults, who want of children respect, obedience, endurance ("Stop crying!"), and silence. Moreover, self-inflicted suffering satisfies deep psychological drives and is therefore usually prominent in primitive religions. Greek religion had little of it, and the growth of individualism and rationalism diminished what little there was. Repressed drives found prudential justification in the example of Sparta; what could not be excused as superstition was admired as wisdom. Sparta was therefore to inspire the Greek philosophical imagination: it showed what could be achieved by lawgiving—the imposition of a "rational" pattern on the life of an entire city. Lycurgus, the supposed "lawgiver" of Sparta, became the great legendary representative of a class whose first real members had been the lawgivers of colonies; the recognition of the importance of the "lawgiver" and the ideal of "the city with

good laws" were probably derived from colonization. Sparta did not reciprocate the philosophers' admiration. It wanted unanimity, not speculation, and banished philosophers because they disagreed. But many philosophers (who would have liked to banish one another) were not deterred by this decision. Sparta became the chief historical source of the ascetic and authoritarian ideals which are at work in Plato's *Republic* and its philosophical followers.

Athens did not subject its neighbors; instead it gave them citizenship. By the end of the eighth century it had united Attica, a territory almost half the size of Long Island. Therefore it, too, at first had no need to colonize or trade. With economic change, the oligarchs gave way gradually. The law began to be published shortly before 621. Solon, in 593, abolished some debts, prohibited enslavement for debt, encouraged manufacture and trade, and reportedly so reformed courts and elections that the poorer citizens could restrain the oligarchy. Some thirty years later one Pisistratus came to power as tyrant, but followed the usual policy of tyrants with unusual moderation and success. He preserved the external forms of the government, improved the lot of the small farmers, won Athens a footing on the Hellespont, built up the city, and died peacefully in 527. The relative tranquillity of his reign went with its prosperity, to which an increase in Athenian trade also contributed. Important exports were olive oil and a new style of pottery, called "black figure" because of the elegant silhouettes of men and animals which cavort on its orange-red ground. This black-figure ware outsold Corinthian pottery all around the Mediterranean—a success deserved by the vigor and variety of its decoration.

Two sons of Pisistratus continued his rule in Athens until 514, when one of them was murdered. The survivor's reprisals increased and united his opponents. After he was driven out in 510, control was won by an alliance of oligarchic and democratic elements which established a new constitution, a compromise in which the *demos*—the majority of the citizens—had the ultimate say. The resultant democracy was a direct government by the citizen body, which itself formed the controlling assembly and decided even technical questions like the disposition of troops before a campaign. To assure that all the citizens had equal opportunity to hold office, officials came to be chosen by lot rather than elected. To assure the assembly's control over officials, their terms were limited to one year, at the end of which they were called to account before a court. But the citizen body which controlled this democracy was composed only of adult, free, native-born males—i.e., about one-sixteenth of the population; women, children, slaves, and aliens were excluded. To be granted citizenship was a rare honor. As always, however, the quality of the government depended less on its form than on the character of those in power. In Athens, the

demos exhibited surprising moderation, the fruit of the oligarchic tradition of mutual forbearance, essential for the working of a democracy. Each side must be confident that the other will not push its victories too far; awareness of common interest must be stronger than mutual distrust. In Athens this awareness was intensified by the hostility of their neighbors and the threat of a return of Pisistratus' family. Another factor was the discovery of large deposits of silver, shortly after 490 Silver built a big navy, which produced employment, prosperity, and civic pride.

The political fortunes of the Near Eastern kingdoms from the fall of Assyria in 609 to the rise of Persia after 559 are of far less importance for world history than are the developments in Greece. But the history of the tiny kingdom of Judah ranks in importance with those of equally tiny Athens and Sparta

All over the Near East "nationalistic" reactions against the Assyrians had been associated with the cults of "national" gods: Nebuchadnezzar II's enormous expenditure for the temple of Marduk in Babylon is a conspicuous example. So in Judea nationism saw a revival of the cult of Yahweh. Since Yahweh was now protector of the poor, this revival was associated with demands for legal reform. Sometime about 630, when Assyria was losing her grip, a lawyer in Jerusalem produced a new code as a program for future reforms, including the prohibition of the worship of gods other than Yahweh, and relief of the poor. He drew on older "Yahweh-alone" traditions, common usage, and ancient taboos, but his work was organized by his own thought, replete with his own invention, and cast in his own style. He represented it as "the law of Yahweh" and—probably—as the work of Moses, and he arranged to have it "found" by the high priest in the Jerusalem temple in 621. It was taken to King Josiah, authenticated by a prophetess, and accepted. Most of it is now preserved, with minor interpolations, in chapters 12–26 and 28 of Deuteronomy. King Josiah tried to enforce it, but he also tried at Megiddo to stop Necho II's invasion of Syria and so met his end in 609. His defeat seems to have been taken as proof of the error of his ways; the later prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel show polytheism back in practice.

But the "Yahweh-alone" party held to the Deuteronomic code, and the code reshaped the party. Like the laws of Sparta, it was to be learned by heart, repeated morning and night, an ever-present monitor of its people. The central act of religion became the learning of the Law, and this it remains for most of Judaism. Moreover, the Deuteronomist inspired a school of followers, recognizable by their imitation of his style, who augmented his code with a "historical" framework eventually extended to include earlier collections of legends and court records. These they reworked to make one great "history," teaching that only when Israel wor-

shipped Yahweh alone did it prosper, and whenever it worshiped other gods it was punished. Thus the "historical" half of the Old Testament began to take shape, while other writers of the school collected, edited, and improved the works of the "Yahweh-alone" prophets. To prevent worship of gods other than Yahweh, the Deuteronomist had proposed to limit sacrificial worship to Jerusalem. Consequently, when the Judeans were carried off to Babylonia, those who held to the code developed a nonsacrificial form of worship, which eventually became prevalent in Judaism and Protestant Christianity.

The party's position was strengthened by the fall of Jerusalem. Since Nebuchadnezzar's defeat of the Egyptians at Carchemish in 605 and subsequent takeover of the Syro-Palestinian coast, the city had been subject to Babylon. Popular, nationalist feeling encouraged revolt by the claim that Yahweh would certainly defend his city. The "Yahweh-alone" prophets, on the contrary, maintained that Yahweh was angered by the city's apostasy and would therefore prolong its servitude; accordingly they were pro-Babylonian. When Nebuchadnezzar, irritated by repeated conspiracies, plundered the city in 597 and destroyed it in 587, the party was able to say, "We told you so."

Moreover, among the exiles in Babylonia, whither Nebuchadnezzar deported most of the upper-class Judeans, the party had a strong position. Their nonsacrificial worship—prayer and praise (psalms), sometimes with reading and exposition of the Law—was inexpensive by comparison with sacrifice. It required no special clergy, equipment, temple, only a "meeting place" (Greek: *synagogue*). This became characteristic of Judaism. Another new characteristic was isolation. Observance of purity laws and the refusal to worship any god save Yahweh had been merely punctilious in Judea; in the diaspora—the "scattering" of Judean settlements outside Palestine—this behavior cut the observant off from the life of the world around and made them a peculiar people. This gave the party coherence, while the Law's great concern for the poor (a sign of its times) gave them the strength of mutual support, which must have won over many of their fellow exiles. Eventually they would return to Jerusalem and gain control of the restored temple. Deuteronomy would then become the basis for an official legal tradition. In yet remoter time its prohibition of the worship of any god other than Yahweh (an offense it would punish by death, Deut. 12–13) was to be an element in the hostility between the Jews and the Romans and was to be taken over from Judaism by Christianity and Islam—a tradition of intolerance from which the Western world has suffered much.

Not all the Judean exiles in Babylonia, however, were followers of the Deuteronomist. The prophet Ezekiel had a different style and vocabulary,

and different legal opinions. Akin to him in these matters was a group of priestly collectors, editors, and inventors of ancient traditions, particularly of legal material, to whom we owe compositions so diverse as Leviticus and the superb creation story in Genesis 1. The notion of Yahweh as creator is also important in the greatest writer of the exile—and one of the greatest writers of all time—the so-called Second Isaiah, author of Isaiah 40–55, whose lyrical expressions of joy and hatred, release and revenge, are of unmatched power. But most powerful and magnificent of all is his concept of Yahweh, throned on the enormous circle of the heavens, declaring, “I am the first, and I am the last; and beside me there is no God.” All gods of all other nations are mere idols which can neither hurt nor help. The religious conceptions of all other peoples are worthless. Such was the logical—or illogical?—conclusion of Yahwist thought.

For Further Reading

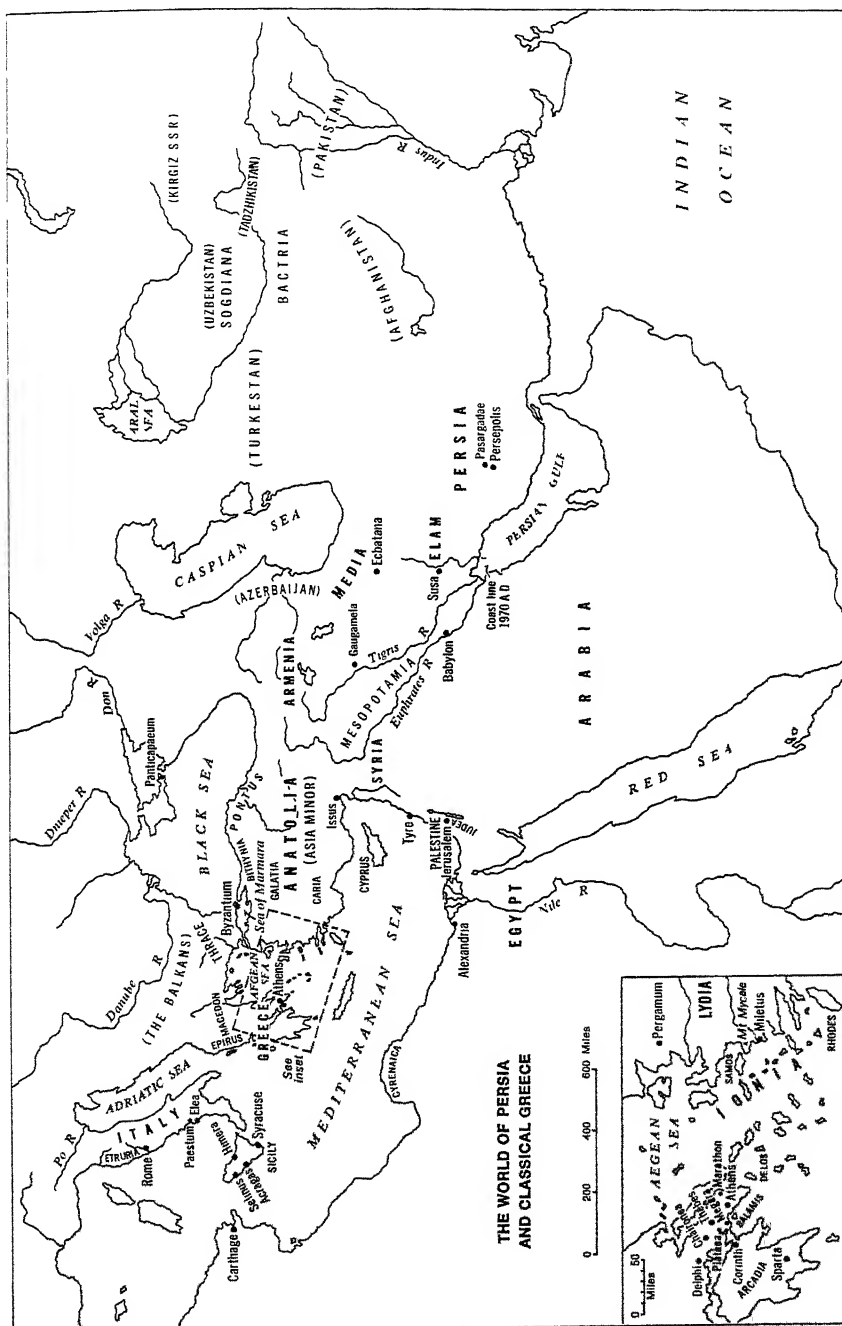
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15 Persia and Athens

Cyrus the Great began his career about 559 as a kinglet in southwestern Persia. He won over the Medes about 550, defeated Croesus of Lydia in 546, and then subjugated Asia Minor. Next he descended on Babylon. King Nabonidus, already at odds with the clergy of Marduk, the chief god, fell in 539. Cyrus then turned to northeastern Persia and was killed there about 530. His son, Cambyses, settled that frontier, then conquered Egypt in 525. On his death in 522 his successor, Darius, put down revolts all over the empire and set about organizing what Cyrus and Cambyses had hastily conquered.

The organization he created was the largest empire the world had seen. It initially included Asia Minor and adjacent islands, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, northern Arabia, Mesopotamia, Persia, Afghanistan, Turkestan, Uzbekistan, the Tadzhik and part of the Kirgiz Soviet Republics, and western Pakistan. To these Darius himself added the rich Indus Valley and Thrace. Macedon and Cyrenaica submitted to him but

- B.C.
- c. 585 Thales of Miletus, beginning of natural philosophy (physics)
 - 560 Pisistratus becomes tyrant of Athens
 - c. 550 Cyrus of Persia conquers Astyages of Media
 - 546 Cyrus conquers Croesus of Lydia
 - c. 540 Xenophanes, philosophic monotheism; "Second Isaiah," nationalistic monotheism
 - 539 Cyrus conquers Nabonidus of Babylon
 - 525 Cambyses, Cyrus' successor, conquers Egypt
 - c. 525 Pythagoras, the philosophic life; the Doric temples of southern Italy and Sicily
 - 522 Darius begins reorganization of the Persian empire
 - 510 Pisistratus' family expelled from Athens
 - 499 Ionian cities, aided by Athens, revolt from Persia
 - c. 499 Athenian red-figure pottery
 - 490 Battle of Marathon, Persian expedition against Athens beaten off
 - 480 Xerxes, Darius' successor, invades Greece; Carthaginian invasion of Sicily defeated at Himera
 - 479 Battle of Plataea, Xerxes' army destroyed; Battle of Mount Mycale, Xerxes' Aegean fleet destroyed; Persia loses Macedon, Thrace, and Cyrenaica
 - 478 Athens creates the Delian League for liberation of Greek cities from Persia
 - c. 475 Parmenides opposition of reality (changeless) to appearance (changing)
 - 458 Aeschylus' *Oresteia*; beginning of Pericles' predominance
 - 457 The "long walls" secure Athens from attack by land
 - 454 The treasury of the Delian League moved to Athens
 - 449 Athens makes peace with Persia
 - 447 Beginning of the Parthenon, work of Ictinus
 - c. 447 The Sophists' study of argument and rhetoric; Pindar (lyric poetry), Sophocles (tragedy), Herodotus (history), Phidias (sculpture)
 - 431-404 The Peloponnesian War, ending with the destruction of the Athenian fleet, the long walls, and the Delian League; Socrates (moral philosophy), Hippocrates (rational medicine), Democritus (atomic theory), Aristophanes (comedy), Euripides (tragedy), Thucydides (history)
 - c. 405 Egypt revolts from Persia



remained self-governing. The size of this empire gave it a military advantage: its enemies on opposite sides were too far apart for effective military cooperation.

The ruler of this empire, the Great King, as the Greeks called him, possessed absolute power. As usual, his power rested on control of the army and was exercised through his appointees. Nevertheless, this empire differed radically from the earlier empires of the Near East. The river valleys were no longer the centers of power, nor were the Semitic peoples the rulers. The Persians spoke an Indo-European language and ruled principally from Susa in Elam and Ecbatana in Media. They also had their own religion, in which an important element was the teaching of Zoroaster, a perhaps seventh-century prophet of some east Iranian cattlemen, whose god, Ahura Mazda, "the wise Lord," had denounced the fertility cults of the settled peasants and had promised to give his followers "the Kingdom." Darius nevertheless patronized the temples of his subjects. But the priest-hoods of the river-valley temples were no longer of the ruling class. The temples now declined sharply in power, more slowly in wealth. The cultural traditions of which they had been the centers declined with them. The new ruling class was a very small group. Seven great families, intricately intermarried, held most of the major positions at the court, military appointments, and governments of the "satrapies," the twenty administrative districts into which the empire was divided.

The great size of the satrapies may have been dictated by the small number of family administrators. In any case, it invited rebellion. Therefore the satraps were not given control of the army corps in their domains; legal cases could be appealed to the Great King; an efficient courier service and chains of fire signals kept the court in touch with the satrapies. Special inspectors, "the King's ears," reported on local conditions. The small number of high officials had as complement an enormous bureaucracy. The administration was united by the use of Aramaic, which in Assyrian times had become the lingua franca of business and had begun to be used in the government. The Persian rulers spoke Persian to one another; royal inscriptions were in Persian with translations in the local languages of the satrapies. In Egypt, hieroglyphics were simplified for rapid writing in a script called "demotic," but even there Aramaic was used by the bureaucracy. This international bureaucracy was matched by an international army of which the core was 10,000 Persian spearmen and the Persian cavalry. After them ranked the Medes, whom Cyrus had won over, then the mercenary troops and levies from the satrapies. To these unifying forces should be added the royal gold currency and the support of the traders for whom the imperial and satrapal courts provided markets, while the extent of the empire made for more freedom and security in transport of merchandise than ever before.

These bonds held the empire of the Great King together for 200 years in spite of repeated crises. The death of each monarch touched off a contest for the throne and revolts in the provinces. Xerxes, Darius' successor, lost much of his fleet and army in his attempt to conquer Greece in 480-479. Macedon and Cyrenaica then broke away, and the Persians were driven out of Thrace and the coastal cities of western Asia Minor, but these latter they eventually regained. The Indus Valley was lost. Later on, satrapies became hereditary, the satraps built up private armies, and this led to revolts. Egypt broke away from 405 to 342. Cyprus was long fought over. But in spite of peripheral losses, harem intrigue, and bureaucratic inefficiency, the empire held together. The Persians never went beyond the Assyrians in the art of winning over the peoples they conquered. Like the Assyrians, they deported large groups and so created minorities dependent on them for protection. They also enlisted many in their army and bureaucracy and so won over a few. The prevalent attitudes of the subject peoples remained temporary subservience and latent hostility, but for the Persians, subservience sufficed.

The ruling class had a taste for magnificence. Artists from many subject peoples were employed to decorate palaces of which Susa, Pasargadae, and Persepolis have yielded sumptuous remains. Their sculpture shows the court on parade; the subject is stodgy, but the technique brilliant; Greeks and Lydians were the stonecutters. Many elegant vessels of gold and silver survive; the goldsmiths were Medes and Egyptians. And so on, for the other artifacts. When we ask what the Persians themselves did, the answer is: They ruled.

Their subjects were at least left free to follow their own traditions. In Egypt and Judea the concern for national tradition was compounded by wishful thinking. As the struggle against external domination became more difficult, men found consolation in fancy, retelling their "histories" with less concern for fact or spinning out legislation for imaginary states. Plato's *Republic* and *Laws* show the same reaction in Greece after the failure of Athens.

In Jerusalem, whither Cyrus had permitted the Judeans to return, cult and temple were reestablished and writers of the priestly and levitical schools gave the Genesis-Kings collection approximately its present form. The prophetic books also continued to grow, mostly by interpolation. But prophecy generally lost standing as men, despairing of immediate changes, turned wistfully either to the past or to the far-off future, to daydreams rather than prophecies. Stories of the good old days and collections of pious sayings and of lamentations were rivaled by accounts of the good time to come, when Yahweh would make Jerusalem the capital of all the earth.

Meanwhile the immediate concern of most men turned, as in Greece, to

private life. Hence the Psalms, a collection of songs which has been, for 1,600 years, the daily devotional reading of pious Jews and Christians. Perhaps no other book has done so much to shape the Western mind. The collection contains a few songs from preexilic times, imploring Yahweh's blessings on the king (21, 46, etc.). A few retell the Mosaic legend in the spirit of postexilic times (105, 106, etc.) Yet more reflect the cult of the restored temple (134, 135, 136, etc.). But the main concern of the book is the private life of the righteous man—his determination to follow the law of Yahweh, his consciousness of his failings, his appeals for mercy, his fears of his enemies, and his hope in Yahweh. Like the Deuteronomic law, these poems were meant to be memorized. They make up a handbook of the spiritual life, constantly suggesting that the real world is a world of enemies from which the righteous man should turn to conversation with his god, i.e., to mild schizophrenia. The conversation repeatedly comes to the question: "Why do the righteous suffer?" To this the answer is only: "Trust in Yahweh and you will be saved."

For some, this assurance was not enough. The author of the poem in Job 3–26, perhaps the greatest intellect in the Hebrew tradition, stated the problem of evil with relentless clarity. What answer he came to, if any, will never be known. An editor has substituted a conclusion of pious resignation. God is incomparably great, therefore it is useless to question his doings.

In 546 the Persians subjugated the Greek cities along the west coast of Asia Minor. Intellectually, this had been the foremost area of the Greek world. Here the Homeric poems had taken shape; here the lyric poets had sung. Here, too, philosophy had begun about 585, with the speculations of Thales as to the possible origin of all things from some single element. This element, he thought, was water. That he was wrong is trivial. The important thing was his attempt to conceive nature as an intelligible order, a "cosmos." This intellectual daring was, in Ionia, fused with the new idea of individualism, that a man does well to disagree with common opinion. A philosopher says: "I have sought out for myself," a historian: "The stories told by the Greeks are many and ridiculous; I write what in my opinion is true." And Sappho writes: "Some say one thing is most beautiful, some another, but I say it is what you love."

From Ionia the spirit of inquiry spread abroad when the Persian conquest produced a wave of emigrants. South Italy and Sicily became briefly the centers of philosophic thought. Xenophanes, who emigrated about 545, argued that the primary substance must be single, eternal, unchanging, conscious, controlling all things—in a word, God. Thus physics led to metaphysics and theology. The contrast is striking between this monotheism and that of Second Isaiah, roughly contemporary. Second Isaiah's

monotheism is a product of wishful polemic Yahweh must be able to rescue the Israelites, therefore to control the world; therefore the other gods are mere idols. Yahweh remained a person and distinct from his creatures. Xenophanes' monotheism attempted to secure acceptance for the idea of an omnipresent, primary substance to which he had been led by philosophy—to make this substance acceptable he called it "God." Both lines of thought led to attacks on idolatry and on popular notions of the gods.

Xenophanes' thought was carried on by a school at Elea where Parmenides (c. 475) demonstrated the contradictions between the notions of being and of change—in other words, between metaphysics and common sense. Maintaining that we should not trust the senses, but judge by reason, he chose metaphysics and conceived of reality as changeless being. Back in Ionia, Heraclitus took the other horn of the dilemma and insisted that reality is constant change, like a fire, of which all things are but brief configurations. Meanwhile, Pythagoras, a Samian aristocrat who had emigrated to south Italy about 530, had turned in a new direction. He conceived of philosophy as a way of life to be realized in a private society. Men who rejected the standards of the world need not resign themselves, like the Psalmists, to converse only with God. He founded a brotherhood to practice the spiritual life and reform the rest of society. Within a century revolutions destroyed his brotherhood, but in the new world, with its growth of private life, its political exiles and *déracinés*, his idea lived on. It inspired Plato and a line of later imitators, through monasticism, to the present day.

Intellectual and political ferment in south Italy and Sicily accompanied economic and artistic development. The Doric temples of Selinus, Paestum, and Acragas (Agrigentum)—wonderfully calm, simple buildings—stand as monuments to the genius of their architects and the wealth of their cities. "The men of Acragas," said one visitor, "dine as if they expected to die tomorrow, and build as if they expected to live forever."

The whole Greek world was attacked by Persia and Carthage early in the fifth century. Darius sent spies to the western Mediterranean and two exploratory expeditions to Greece; the first was shipwrecked in 492, the second beaten off by the Athenians at Marathon in 490. The main attacks, Persian and Carthaginian together, came under Xerxes in 480. They failed. Xerxes lost much of his fleet at Salamis, while the Carthaginians were annihilated at Himera. The next year the rest of Xerxes' fleet was destroyed at Mount Mycale, and the land army he had left in Greece was destroyed at Plataea. The Greeks had solid body armor, longer spears, and better athletic training. To the Persians these defeats, though serious, were peripheral; they did not damage the main structure of the empire. But to the Greeks, victory was all-important. Even Marathon was a cause of

enormous pride to Athens; it was the first time, we are told, that Greeks had ever stood up to Persian troops. When the new Athenian fleet played the leading part in the victory of Salamis, Athens could claim to have been the savior of Greece, and the claim was a major factor in the building of her later empire. Another factor was the instability of Sparta, where the upper class were opposed to foreign campaigns because they increased the powers of the kings. Accordingly Sparta left the liberation of the Greek cities around the Aegean to the Athenians.

For this task the Athenians were well equipped. The cities were almost all seaport towns, and the coast was deeply denticulated, thus a naval force had a tactical advantage. Many of the cities were Ionian, and so were the Athenians. They were familiar with the Aegean because of their trade, while both trade and democratic government had given them businessmen-politicians skilled in negotiation, aware of economic interests, and able to draw an advantageous contract.

Such a contract created in 478 the Delian League, so called because it met and stored its money on Delos, the Ionian island shrine of Apollo. (Sanctuaries were always chosen for treasuries, the god being guard.) The contract bound the signatories to follow a common foreign policy and to contribute ships or money, as assessed by Athens. Athens contributed the most ships and commanded the entire fleet. League members paid, in assessments, enough to maintain about 100 ships. These ships Athens provided, gaining military experience while the allies learned how to pay taxes. Beside these, Athens contributed about 100 ships of her own and the large allies, taken together, about the same number, in all, 300 ships and 60,000 men. This force freed the Greek cities around the Aegean, the liberated cities joined the league. Others were forced to come in. Athens also conquered islands held by non-Greek peoples, sold the inhabitants as slaves, and settled their lands with Athenian colonists. When members tried to withdraw from the league, they were conquered and forced to remain. Thus the Delian League in fact became an Athenian empire. Athens intervened in her allies' domestic policies by supporting democratic parties and setting up governments similar to her own. These parties and governments were usually loyal to Athens, but the people of the allied cities never thought themselves Athenians. As in other Near Eastern empires, one political group dominated its neighbors, but was unable to assimilate them. Like the Persians, Athens enlisted individuals from subject states in her military forces and so secured the loyalty of some. She went beyond the Persians in securing the support of a party in each subject city by political affiliation—"political ideology" now appears as an important factor in alliances. But she remained, in relation to her subjects, an alien ruling power.

Athens' acquisition of an empire abroad and her development of democracy at home were complementary. The empire paid directly for half of the city's ships; indirectly, as a preferential trading area, it paid more. This money paid the citizens who participated in Athens' assemblies and the jurors who served in her courts. Without pay the poor could not have attended to these offices. Above all the navy had to have oarsmen, and oarsmen had to be paid.* The wages of the oarsmen—36,000 for 200 ships—came from the empire. Since the oarsmen were the poor, the poor favored imperialism. Since the poor—as always—were the majority, democracy perpetuated imperialism. Leadership came from the newly rich traders who profited from the empire, as opposed to the landed aristocracy. It was the latter who furnished the best troops of the army, but in the 460's there were only 300 cavalry and about 10,000 hoplites. Further, in 457 a pair of "long walls," connecting Athens with its harbor, was completed. The Greeks were still inexperienced in siege warfare; they could do nothing against a fortified city save try to starve it out. With these walls Athens could not be conquered, for she controlled the sea and could not be starved. The navy could now dispense with the army.

The democrats, however, had got involved in central Greece and needed the army to hold it down. Also they were backing an Egyptian revolt against the Persians and that took a large force. It was no time to alienate fighting men. Pericles, the new leader of the democratic party, therefore moved slowly. But a series of defeats abroad forced him to make peace with Persia in 449 and with the powers of mainland Greece in 446. Thus the army's role and the aristocracy's importance were minimized, but the navy remained essential to control the overseas league. Military employment was replaced by a building program, of which the Parthenon is the masterpiece, financed by the league's treasury. This was supplemented by economic measures: the coinage of most league members was replaced by Athenian issues. Law cases were made transferable to Athens, assuring a steady flow of visitors, business, and bribes. Resultant rebellions by league members were profitably suppressed. Colonization was pushed and an expedition sent to the Black Sea, whence Athens got much of its grain and salt fish, and where it sold much of its wine and oil. Cheap food was a mainstay of democracy; it helped the poor in the city and cut down the income of the landed aristocracy. These measures kept Athens relatively prosperous, but ruined the other cities of the league. The eclipse of the Ionian coast, begun by Persian conquest, was finished by Athenian liberation.

Moreover, Athens' prosperity frightened her enemies. Thebes, the main

*Sailing boats were for trade. Ships fought by ramming each other; in such a fight a sail boat had no chance against a more maneuverable oared ship.

city of central Greece, remembered Athens' attempt to dominate the district. Megara's trade was ruined by Athenian rivalry. Corinth also felt the loss of trade, and she was angered by Athenian interference with her colonies. And Sparta felt that her position as the leader of Greece was threatened. The resultant "Peloponnesian" war broke out in 431, two years before Pericles' death. It was interrupted by a truce from 421 to 414, and ended in 404. The upshot was the ruin of Athens, which had lost between a half and two-thirds of her citizens; her territory had been plundered annually for twenty years; about 500 warships had been lost, her people were starving. She surrendered to the Spartans, the long walls were pulled down, the fleet and the overseas territories were given up, and the Delian League was dissolved.

The Athenian "empire" was the shortest-lived of all the Near Eastern empires and also the smallest; at its greatest extent it encompassed only Attica, most of the Aegean islands and the coastlands on the north and east, a sprinkling of strongholds around Greece, southern Asia Minor, and the Black Sea, and one colony in Italy. But the cultural development of Athens, in this brief period, transformed Western history.

Novelty in human institutions is always a matter of degree. There had previously been big cities and influential bourgeoisies. But about 50,000 Athenian citizens governed an empire. Of these, perhaps 15,000 were well-to-do. They constituted a new kind of market and power. The art created for them is radically different from that created for the rulers of Egypt, Assyria, and Persia, because, by comparison with those rulers, even the wealthiest Athenians were almost indigent. Alcibiades, one of the richest men in the city, had an estate of less than 75 acres. The high officials of the state and its honored guests dined at the public table; the *pièce de résistance* was a barley loaf with goat's milk and cheese. On festival days there was meat, the loaf was wheat, and there might even be a sesame cake. Such austerity transformed art and aesthetics; limited means necessitated simplicity. To simplicity, already characteristic of Greek elegance, Athenian art added a delicacy of feeling, a lighter touch, and an interest in sentiment. This more economical and appealing art, for these reasons, became "classic."

This new bourgeois restraint also affected Athenian architecture. Where former empires produced palaces, Athens produced public buildings: colonnaded marketplaces, gymnasia, monumental law courts and assembly places, theaters, music halls to seat thousands—all unknown to pre-Greek building. Even temples were designed less for the service of gods than for the delight of citizens. Religious services remained simple. The priesthoods were elective offices, sought as public honors. The temple was, in its ground plan, a hut with a porch in front, a storage room behind, and

a surrounding colonnade. But the structure was now of marble and the proportions a wonder to the world. Even in the temples restraint of decoration and delicacy of feeling prevailed. In place of the squat, bulldog strength of earlier temples, the new Doric style was higher and lighter; even more so the Ionic, now adopted. The figures of sculpture, too, became lighter. Bourgeois mentality appeared in the naturalism, present even in figures of the gods; bourgeois morality, in the restraint of this naturalism by reverence and by the common-sense notion that art "should" represent beautiful things.

The intellectual interests of this Athenian bourgeoisie were also practical. First came rhetoric. To speak well was prerequisite for power in the assembly. In a law court it might be a matter of life or death. One had to speak for oneself, and the jury might number several hundred. Therefore in the first half of the century there appeared traveling teachers known as sophists ("men who make you wise"), who taught, besides rhetoric, "how to do well in life." They specialized in devising plausible arguments for almost any claim—hence the term "sophistry." This technique contributed both to the breakdown of moral standards and to the danger of lawsuits. The man who could not afford to be trained by a sophist needed a professional speechwriter. Such writers also wrote sample speeches to demonstrate their powers. Some had admirers who carried around and repeated their masterpieces. Henceforth speeches were an important form of the new prose literature of entertainment. Since these professional writers often demonstrated their skill by arguing against common opinion, their work also contributed to the breakdown of traditional standards and consequent development of moral philosophy.

The Athenians had little tolerance for philosophic teaching which had no practical application. Therefore the major developments in speculative physics were still made in Ionia, where Democritus (c. 430) actually anticipated nineteenth-century physics by adding, to Heraclitus' continual change, the specification that what is changing is a congeries of atoms. Scientific medicine also began in Ionia with Hippocrates, who argued that to understand an illness one must take into account the whole patient and his environment and must base one's treatment on experience of similar cases.

Nevertheless, Athens became the center of the philosophical thought of the Western world. Socrates, an idle stonemason, made it so. He drifted around the city with a circle of rich or beautiful young men, entangling respectable citizens in arguments about "justice," "bravery," "piety," and the like. Since he was highly skilled in argument, he made them look foolish. In 399 various victims accused him of corrupting the youth and introducing the worship of new deities. He was found guilty and executed.

We can only guess at his teachings from the unreliable reports of his pupils, but some results of his work are certain. He changed the main concern of philosophy from physics to ethics. He developed the question-and-answer method of treating problems and so contributed to the discovery of logic. He created the private "philosophic life" devoted to intellectual investigation and indifferent to the surrounding society. Finally, he formed a circle of disciples who would propagate his teachings. His death made many of these disciples enemies of democracy. Since democracy was to prevail in Athens through the next four centuries, Western philosophy inherited from the Athenian schools a tradition of separation from government and an affectation of superiority to public officials.

The condemnation of Socrates was in striking contrast to the freedom allowed Athenian dramatists. Oligarchic Greece had honored the gods with contests in athletics and lyric poetry, chiefly at rural shrines where the rich and their followers were the principal audience. Democratic Athens made these contests part of its civic festival of Athena and added to them, for its festivals of Dionysus, contests between dramatic poets and teams of performers. Elsewhere the older style of lyric continued to flourish, Pindar, its greatest master in the fifth century, died in 438. But for the bourgeois taste of Athens, drama added to the lyric more naturalistic presentation, the portrayal of human problems and passions, philosophic argumentation, cross-questioning, the confrontation of conflicting personalities—in a word, the life of the city. And, as in the life of the city, almost anything might be called in question, particularly in comedy which had behind it a tradition of ritual abuse in the Dionysiac festivals. During the Peloponnesian War, Aristophanes produced plays attacking the all-powerful demagogues of the war party, lamenting the losses, and advocating peace. He was equally free in ridiculing at least some of the gods, and even in tragedy critical discussion of generally accepted standards was common. Any radical idea attributed to Socrates can be matched in the great tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Perhaps the difference lay in the fact that the dramas always ended with virtue vindicated. This dubious virtue should not distract us from their great historical importance as the first examples of a new form of entertainment, a form more popular, more thought-provoking, lyrically beautiful, and profoundly moving than any the world had heretofore seen.

Even more important than the drama, in the long run, was the development of a prose literature read for pleasure. Speeches have already been mentioned. The greatest works, however, were the histories, of which Herodotus' and Thucydides' are preserved. Herodotus' history is an account of the eastern Mediterranean world from the beginning of the last Lydian dynasty (c. 672) until the complete ruin of Xerxes' expedition in

479. Thucydides' is a history of the Peloponnesian War. History had been written before (brilliantly, for instance, by the author of the life of David in I and II Samuel); it appeared independently in different civilizations and with different values. The specific value of Greek historiography is to ask questions. The authors did not begin from knowledge but from inquiry. They set out to discover something. Herodotus asked the cause of the Persian war and found it, not in any particular fact, but in the whole panorama of Greek relations with the Near East.

The great thing about Herodotus' history is the scope. A Greek from Asia Minor, won over by Athens, he reflects the trading tradition behind Ionian thought and its interest in geography. He is the Greek traveler, curious about all the sights, customs, and legends of the lands he visits. Why do they do this? How do they explain that? A weary Egyptian priest once said, "The Greeks are always children." In Herodotus we glimpse the delight of these grown-up children in the extent and variety of the world. But, like a traveler, he is always an outsider; he has never seen a great government from the inside and has no good notion of how one works.

Thucydides, on the other hand, when he set out to discover just why the Peloponnesian War had gone as it did, had a good notion of the likely reasons. He had been a member of the board of generals which controlled Athens. The great contribution of his work, therefore, is the conception of history as a concatenation of specific causes with specific results. He is remarkable, too, for his capacity to rise above facts and view a long series of them as a single process, or reduce a complex of events to a single pattern. In these respects, and with his sardonic picture of human behavior, he has been the teacher of rulers and has shaped history by shaping the beliefs of those who studied him. His own beliefs, and those of Herodotus, had been shaped by Homer. Both thought of war as the proper subject of history. But each strayed from the Homeric theme to indulge his own interests, Herodotus in foreign lands, Thucydides in Athenian politics.

In this respect Thucydides represents the interests of the Athenian bourgeoisie, Herodotus of the uprooted. For the man who stayed in his own city, politics, business, and agriculture were the major concerns, and it was now settled, at least in Athens, that business and agriculture were beneath the dignity of literature. The political achievement of Athens, therefore, is the most serious and specific record of its culture. That record is double.

On the one hand Athens is the classic example of successful democratic government of a large territory. In Athens itself the attachment to democracy was strong enough to survive the debacle of 404, throw off a tyranny, and maintain itself, in spite of interruptions by outside powers, down to Roman times. Moreover, democracy was not merely a political peculiarity;

it was linked with the ideals of freedom in private life, equality in opportunity to hold public office, and an education which sought to produce adaptability rather than to perpetuate a pattern. For democracy thus conceived as a way of life, the great speech written for Pericles by Thucydides (II.35 ff.) is evidence, exposition, and apology.

On the other hand, Athens was also the classic example of the failure of democracy. Her rule had ended in tyranny abroad and demagoguery at home. Abroad she subjugated her allies, looted them, and imposed on them, in the name of democracy, rulers from the lower classes who could hold their positions only with her help and would therefore be her spaniels. At home the courts were a farce enlivened by capital punishment, while the assembly repeatedly refused to recognize unwelcome facts, make necessary sacrifices, and reward and punish justly. When the Spartans took the city, survivors and exiles joined in pulling down the long walls to the sound of flutes, "believing that day was the beginning of freedom for Greece."

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16 The Fourth Century to the Death of Alexander

From the fall of Athens to the fall of Persia the military and political history of Greece is complicated but trivial. Sparta declared the Greek cities on the mainland and in the Aegean "free"; those in Asia Minor were given to Persia in return for help in the war. Presently they revolted with the connivance of the Persian viceroy in Asia Minor, Cyrus, who was preparing an attack on his elder brother, the Great King, Artaxerxes II, and wanted Greek support. When Cyrus was killed in the attack (401), the satraps in Asia Minor tried to reconquer the cities; the cities appealed to Sparta for help and got it. This angered Persia, so she financed the rebuilding of the long walls of Athens and instigated an Athenian and Theban attack on Sparta. The Spartans were forced to withdraw from Asia Minor

- B.C 404-371 Spartan hegemony in Greece
 - 404 Greek cities of Asia Minor given back to Persia
- 400-394 Spartan intervention in Asia Minor
 - 399 Trial and execution of Socrates
 - 395 Persia finances Greek attacks on Sparta
 - 394 Rebuilding of the long walls of Athens begun with Persian help
 - 378 Formation of the Second Athenian League
 - 371 Battle of Leuctra, Sparta decisively defeated by Thebes
- 371-362 Theban hegemony in Greece; Spartan control of the Peloponnese ended; establishment of the Arcadian League; the legal and historical books of the Old Testament reach approximately their present form; Plato teaching in Athens; Praxiteles; Isocrates
- 359 Philip II becomes king of the Macedonians
- 341 Persia reconquers Egypt
- 338 Battle of Chaironea, Philip II defeats Athens and Thebes and subjugates Greece; Aristotle, Diogenes, Demosthenes
- 336 Philip II assassinated; Alexander succeeds
- 334 Alexander invades the Persian Empire
- 333 Defeat of Darius III at Issus
- 332 Capture of Tyre
- 331 Foundation of "Alexandria by Egypt"; defeat of Darius III at Gaugamela; capture of Babylon, Susa, and Persepolis
- 330 Capture of Ecbatana; death of Darius III
- 329 Conquest of Bactria
- 328 Conquest of Sogdiana
- 327 Invasion of Pakistan
- 326 Conquest of the Indus Valley
- 325 Return across south Persia
- 323 Death of Alexander in Babylon

in 394 Their withdrawal was followed by a half-century of intermittent warfare in Greece First Sparta was cock of the walk for twenty years. Then Thebes developed a new military technique, that of massing troops in one area to break through the opponent's line, which could then be attacked from its unarmed flank This technique made Thebes briefly (371-362) the strongest power in Greece. She set up an "Arcadian League" in the center and southwest of the Peloponnese to keep Sparta down. But while she and Sparta were at war, Athens had organized a new league including many of her former island allies and a few on the mainlands When Thebes collapsed, she emerged as the strongest power in southern Greece. By that time, however, Greek politics was soon to be overshadowed by the growth of Macedon, whose king, Philip II, would appropriate and develop the Theban technique and back it up with cavalry.

The growth of Macedon was the most important example of a phenomenon now going on all around the Mediterranean—the development of large "Hellenized barbarian" states in which the culture of the ruling class was mostly Greek, but the population mostly non-Greek—or Greek of such a savage sort that the Greeks would scarcely recognize it Beside Macedon and Epirus in northern Greece, the old Milesian colony of Panticapaeum in south Russia became the center of such a kingdom So did the Carians, a people of southwest Asia Minor who now became practically independent of Persia Although the rulers of the new kingdom of Egypt (from 404 on) continued Saite traditionalism in their elegant art and official inscriptions, they became dependent on Greek mercenaries, the land was full of Greek traders, and traces of Greek culture were everywhere visible. Egypt's reconquest by Persia in 341 was a blow to Greek economy. Similarly in Carthage, while Punic continued to be used, the form of government, the intellectual life, and the bric-a-brac were alike Hellenized. In Sicily Dionysius I, tyrant of Syracuse, built up a kingdom which contained most of Sicily, the toe and heel of Italy, and points along the Adriatic; his court was a center of Greek culture, but his subjects were largely non-Greek and he relied on the non-Greeks to support him against the Greeks. In Etruria the Etruscans, long imitators of the Greeks, were almost ruined by invasions of the Celts in the 380's, but the admiration of Greek culture was implanted in the area, and when Rome grew up it would show deep Greek influence.

These new Hellenized states were the results of a long radiation of Greek culture—a new civilizing of the barbarians—which had gone on unnoticed around the Greek colonies. The northeastern and central Mediterranean had been transformed from a world of Greek cities and scattered tribes of barbarians to one of Greek cities and settled states of considerable size with civilized rulers. This change made the Greek cities second-rate

powers. It also ruined their trade. The new countries produced much of their own wine and olive oil and even local imitations of Greek manufactured wares. At the same time the revolts in the western Persian satrapies, the wars between Persia and Egypt and between the Greeks and Carthaginians in Sicily, the civil wars of the tyrants in Sicily and south Italy, and the Celtic invasions in north Italy, all destroyed rich markets. But in Greece the necessity of buying food abroad continued unchanged. The consequent economic crisis led to revolutions and counterrevolutions. These were made worse by the wars, which disrupted trade, ruined farms, and filled the cities with refugees and exiles whose poverty complicated the social problem.

Consequently men fled the country. Greeks were already, because of their armor and training, the foremost mercenaries of the Near Eastern states. Now their numbers abroad redoubled and Greece itself filled up with mercenaries. Nevertheless, the century saw major cultural achievements, mostly in Athens and mostly the results of specialization. Specialization in speechwriting and speaking now produced its greatest masters, the writer Isocrates and the orator Demosthenes. Similar specialization appears in sculpture: Praxiteles, the most imitated artist in history, produced the statue sufficient to itself, unrelated to architectural setting, probably devoid of content, a sheer expression of delight in the plastic and tactile qualities of human beauty and in the dazzling technical proficiency of the artist. His statues of female nudes were set up in temples as goddesses. The same development of technique and neglect of consequences appeared in finance, in which banking now became a specialty, newly important because mercenaries had to be paid. And in civic administration the experts on finance were at loggerheads with the newly professional generals, neither group willing to recognize the other's needs. Even the gods specialized: the shrines of Asclepius, a specialist in healing, spread to every part of the Greek world. But the two fields in which specialization yielded its most significant results were war and philosophy.

Socrates had created the philosophic life, but he was not a professional philosopher. A number of his pupils became "professionals" in that they made philosophy the thing they "did." The greatest of these was Plato, who left Athens in disgust after Socrates' execution in 399, but returned after 387, settled in a suburb called Academia, and established a private society, nominally for the worship of the Muses, which endured until A.D. 529 when the emperor Justinian closed it in the interest of Christian truth. It was the first example in Europe of an endowed institution for humane studies.

Just what Plato taught orally is not known, but his published works have influenced all subsequent Western philosophic and theological thought. His perfection of Socrates' question-and-answer technique led

toward the discovery of formal logic and the rationalistic criticism of common beliefs (important in Hellenistic thought and in Christian polemics against paganism) He gave classic expression to dualism, beginning with the duality in all objects between the form, which can be known and must therefore be permanent, and the material, which is always changing and therefore unknowable. Hence there are two worlds—the world of forms, being, knowledge, light, beauty, truth, the mind, reason, and the philosopher; the world of matter, change, ignorance, darkness, error, falsity, the body, sensation, and the workman. Hence the good life is an escape from the world of the body; asceticism is the handmaid of philosophy. Finally, Plato was a superb artist; his style and his literary form—the dialogue—became models; his myths of creation, the soul, and the after-life, his imaginative pictures of the ideal state and the idealized Socrates, have been perennial sources of inspiration.

In the long run, even Plato's influence was overshadowed by that of his pupil Aristotle, the completely professional philosopher. His dry treatises deal with the problem posed by the development of specialization: What is the structure of the whole of knowledge wherein each of the specialists' subjects has its place? In other words, how are these subjects related? This problem is basic to systematic philosophy and also to the practical task of organizing the many branches of knowledge for cooperation, as in a university or an academy of sciences. But Aristotle's importance was not at once apparent because he could not fully answer the problem. He laid the bases for an answer by his studies of logic, his classification of the ways in which objects differ (the categories of knowledge), his detailed accounts of a number of fields of knowledge (logic, metaphysics, physics, zoology, psychology, ethics, political theory, rhetoric), and his creation of much scientific terminology. These were to be the tools of the mind, and eventually the mind would win, but its time was not yet.

At the moment, the Greek world was filled with the consequences of specialization in war. These became fully apparent only when worked out by a brilliant soldier who was also an absolute ruler of a large people: Philip II of Macedon. None of his smaller or less warlike neighbors could stand against him. Striking first on one side, then on the other, making peace with one enemy as a prelude to attacking the next, between 359 and 339 he extended Macedonian control south to central Greece and east to the Sea of Marmara. Goaded by Demosthenes, the Athenians tried several times to stop him. Finally, when they sent their forces to protect Byzantium (Istanbul), Philip suddenly marched into Greece, defeated them and their allies at Chaironea in 338, subjugated the Peloponnese, established Macedonian garrisons at key points, organized the Greek cities in a league under his control, proclaimed a general peace, and began preparations for an attack on Persia. In the midst of these he was assassinated in 336.

His son, Alexander, carried on his policy. After liquidating other claimants to the throne and smashing opponents in the Balkans and Greece, he was able in 334 to invade Asia Minor. In that year he took the cities of the west coast and the center of the country; in 333 he entered Syria, defeated the Great King (Darius III) at Issus, and proceeded down the coast to Tyre, probably intending to cut off the bases of the Persian fleet and prevent its making trouble in Greece. The siege of Tyre—until then an island, he made it a promontory—held him up until August of 332; thereafter he took Egypt. Returning from Egypt in 331 he set out for Persia, where Darius had raised another army. Alexander smashed it at Gaugamela in October. Babylon, Susa, and Persepolis, with immense treasures, next fell, and Persepolis was destroyed. Thence he turned north to Media, taking Ecbatana in 330, thence east in pursuit of Darius. But Darius was murdered by one of his own satraps. Alexander thereupon declared himself Darius' successor and pressed on to reconquer "his" kingdom. This led him through six years of fighting in Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Khazakstan, and Pakistan, down the Indus Valley and back across southern Persia to Babylon, where (after a year of reorganization and another expedition to Media) he died on June 10, 323, in the palace of Nebuchadnezzar II. He was thirty-two years old.

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17 The Hellenistic World

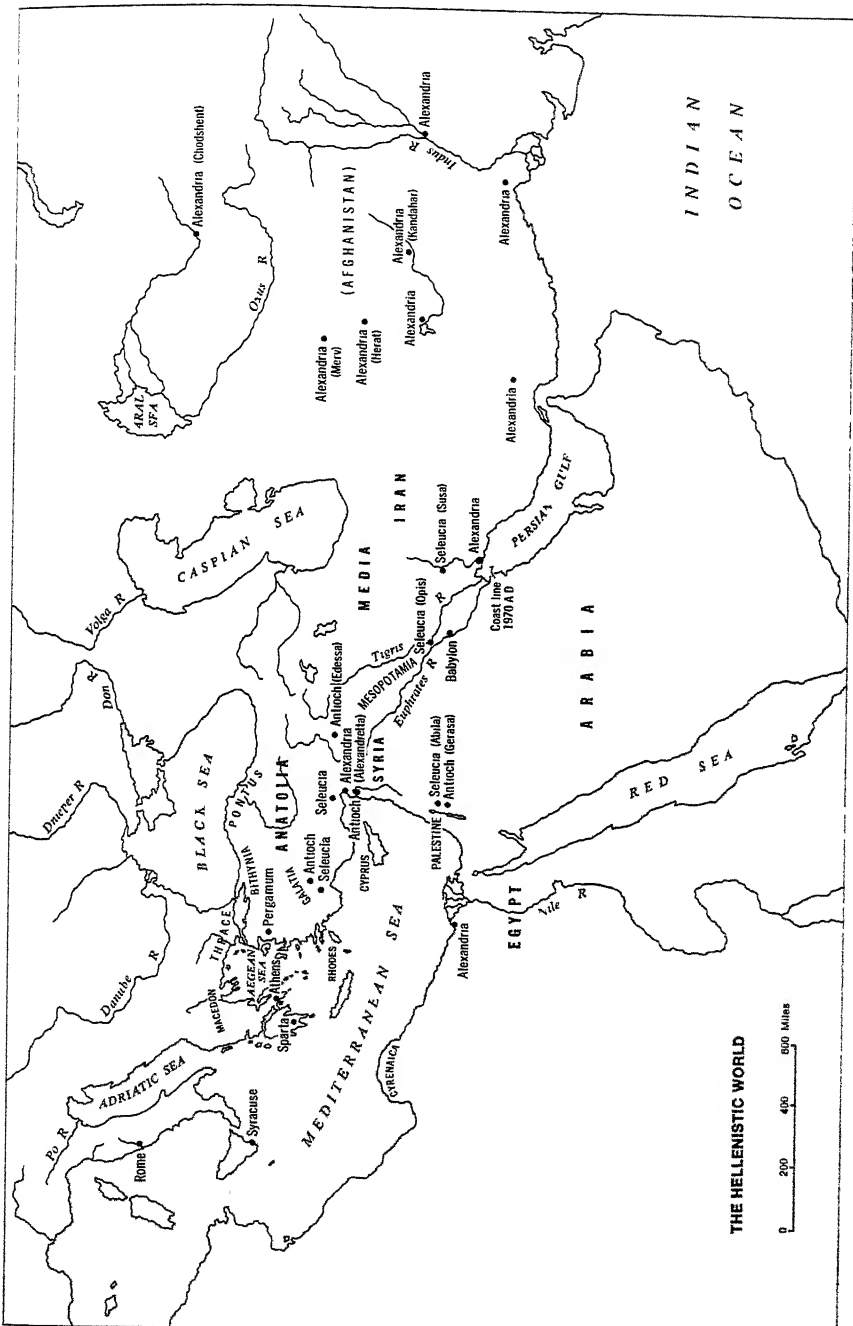
Alexander's generals carved his conquests into kingdoms. When, by 276, their wars of succession stopped, three great powers, ruled by three great families, had emerged: Macedon of the Antigonids; Egypt, with Palestine, Cyrenaica, and Cyprus, of the Ptolemies; and Asia, from Anatolia to Afghanistan, of the Seleucids. In the meantime a fourth great power had appeared in the west. By 268 Rome had won control of all Italy south of the Po Valley. But the courts of Macedonia, Syria, and Egypt paid hardly

- B.C 323-276 Wars of Alexander's successors, emergence of the three major Hellenistic kingdoms: Antigonid Macedonia, Ptolemaic Egypt (with Cyrenaica, Cyprus, and Palestine), and the Seleucid empire (southern Asia Minor, Syria, Mesopotamia, Media, Iran, Afghanistan), Menander and the "new comedy" (of manners), Epicurus, Zeno (founder of Stoicism), Theophrastus
- c. 290 The colossus of Rhodes
- 279 Galatians devastate Thrace, Macedonia, and north Greece, some then cross to central Asia Minor
- 275-215 Zenith of Alexandria as center of the new "Hellenistic" culture; Aristarchus, Archimedes, Euclid, Eratosthenes, Theocritus, Apollonius Rhodius, Manetho and Berossus; development of alchemy and astrology; translation of the Pentateuch into Greek (the Septuagint)
- 268 Rome in control of all Italy south of the Po Valley
- 215 Serious native revolts in Egypt begin
- c. 175 The great altar of Pergamum

any attention to the events in Italy, a land as far away from the Greek world as America was from Europe in the nineteenth century.

The Greek powers sparred with one another, but established peace within most of their territories. At the same time economic changes diminished the bellicosity of the Greek cities. Alexander had coined the Persian treasures to pay his troops, and many came home with their gains. Money thus became available to pay for new ships and rebuild ruined farms. Even more important, the opening of the Near East gave jobs to the unemployed and homes to the homeless of Greece. The colonists lived better than before. They now could eat white bread; barley was for slaves. They could also afford the products of the old country, their native wines, olive oil, and pottery. Pottery now began to imitate silverware, it was no longer a luxury; the standard of wealth had risen. Goldsmiths copied and developed Persian styles with great delicacy and magnificence.

This prosperity was the economic basis of a new cultural flowering in Greece. The center of concern was the everyday life of the well-to-do. Even the manufacture of terra-cotta statuettes was raised to a fine art. Sculptors



extended the range of their work, developing new interests in realism, portraiture, and pathos. The comedians, notably Menander, abandoned farce and politics for the intrigues of private bourgeois life. Through their Roman imitators they became the ancestors of modern psychological drama. The new schools of philosophy, disagreeing on many points, agreed that the aim of philosophy was to secure personal happiness, conceived as psychological equilibrium. They agreed also that the average man could attain this, not by changing the world around him, but by changing himself. So "philosophy" became essentially training to live the good life, to make oneself as far as possible independent both of luck and of the environment, of approval and disapproval.

As to the exact nature of the good life, three major schools disagreed. First came the Cynics ("Dogs"), whose founder, Diogenes, had made a name for himself in the mid-fourth century by his caustic wit and utter neglect of social conventions. (When laughed at for masturbating in public Diogenes said he wished he could satisfy hunger by rubbing his stomach.) His followers taught that man was an animal and that the good life consisted in satisfying one's animal needs. Since needs cause trouble, the wise man will train himself to have as few as possible and to disregard any convention that might interfere with their satisfaction. A second school, the Stoics, was named from the colonnade (Greek, *stoa*) in Athens, where Zeno, its founder, taught from about 300 to 270. For the Stoics, man is an incarnation of reason, the thinking fire that produces and directs the world. The good life is that which accords with reason; this is also wisdom and virtue, and the consciousness of his own wisdom and virtue enables the wise man—trained by the practice of asceticism—to regard with indifference public opinion, private misfortune, and even death itself. Finally the Epicureans—Epicurus was an older contemporary of Zeno—maintained that man is a temporary congeries of atoms, dissolved at death. The part of wisdom, therefore, is to enjoy life while we have it, and the good life is the untroubled one. Wisdom is that knowledge and training which keeps men out of trouble. It teaches men to avoid political and emotional entanglements, build up friendships which make them secure in society, live economically, take care of their health, tolerate pain, and have no fear of death. In sum, Hellenistic philosophy taught indifference and intellectual arrogance. It inspired much later rationalism, but Christian asceticism as well. Strong personalities are still attracted by the central article of its faith: Man is the master of his fate and captain of his soul.

The Hellenistic kingdoms differed widely. Macedon was unique in that the rulers and the ruled were, more or less, one people. In the east the Seleucids relied, for control of the native population, on their standing army of Macedonians and Greeks, their bureaucracy, and the network of

Greek cities across their domains. Alexander left a string of Alexandrias from Egypt to central Asia as military centers, to protect his conquests and his lines of communication. The Seleucids and other Hellenistic rulers followed his example; cities named for various members of their dynasties (Seleucia, Antioch, etc.) were founded everywhere to control the lands around them.

In Egypt the Ptolemies became Greek pharaohs. They founded very few cities, since they did not want their power limited by the right of self-government which went with a Greek city. Instead, both the native Egyptians and the Greek settlers in Egypt, often military colonists, were governed by royal officials. Legally the immigrants and their descendants remained foreigners employed in the royal service. All economic activity was supervised by the king. The government decided which fields were to be planted and with what; where the crops were to be sold and for how much. It regulated transportation, processing, manufacturing, trade, and banking. Nothing escaped taxation. Even abandoned babies were collected and sold—the proceeds going to the privy purse. Since the government rightly distrusted both taxpayers and tax collectors, this system required endless bookkeeping and an immense bureaucracy which, always oppressive, became ruinously expensive, and so contributed to a series of native revolts beginning in 216. But from about 275–215 the system made the Ptolemies the richest Hellenistic rulers. Inspired by Greek analytic thought and organization—they set up a separate department for each branch of economic activity—theirs was perhaps the greatest technical achievement of the age. And it brought out men of the new managerial psychology who found their calling in the service of the kings. We have most of the business records of one of them, yet we do not know whether he had a family.

The wealth thus accumulated was lavished upon Alexandria, the greatest city in the world. Legally it was not “in” Egypt, but was a Greek city “by” Egypt. Here Hellenistic culture reached its acme. The court attracted brilliant writers. New literary forms—the epigram, the pastoral of Theocritus, the literary epic of Apollonius Rhodius—came to the fore. The Ptolemies turned their genius for organization to the patronage of science and scholarship. A royal institute was founded, legally for the cult of the Muses, whence its name, the Museum. Royal funds provided for buildings, support of members, and accumulation of an enormous library. Alexandria became the greatest center of historical and scientific studies in the Greek world. But this brilliance was paid for by denial of Greek city life to the rest of the country; the Hellenization of the Egyptians lagged far behind that of the Syrians.

Beside the major kingdoms a number of minor Hellenistic states grew up, for instance, Pontus and Bythinia in northern Asia Minor. Their most

important action during this age was to protect themselves against the Seleucids by inviting into Asia Minor the barbaric Celts (Galatians) who had devastated Greece in 279–278 and now, established in central Anatolia, terrorized the cities along the coast, breaking up Seleucid rule. On the coast the dynasts of Pergamum, with Ptolemaic help, stood off both Seleucids and Galatians and built up an autocratic court supported by a suppressed countryside. The Pergamene sculptors produced the greatest work of the age, a dramatic frieze of gods battling giants, to commemorate the Galatian wars. The Pergamene library was second only to the Alexandrian, and the technique perfected there of preparing skins for writing (“parchment” comes from the Latin *pergamena*, “pergamene”) was to save, in the Middle Ages, many ancient texts which would have disappeared had they been written on more fragile material. By contrast to Pergamum, Rhodes carried on the tradition of the Greek city-states. The shift of trade to the eastern Mediterranean made it a great shipping and banking center. It beat off the Antigonids with the help of the Ptolemies and vice versa. Its fleet restrained piracy; its sea law started an international tradition, the security and freedom of the city made it the home of eminent philosophers and artists. Its colossal statue of the sun god Helios was one of the wonders of the world.

All these different states shared a single culture, usually called Hellenistic. This culture was consciously Greek and international, rooted in the common feeling of the Greeks abroad, where differences between Spartan and Athenian paled beside those between Greek and native. A curious consequence of this was that anyone, whether native or Greek, came to be called a Greek if he possessed the culture. And this culture was not linked to any political power or even, necessarily, to any religion. Superficially it was a matter of costume, language, and technology; profoundly, of the analytic way of thought. Thus, later, native rulers like the Maccabees promoted Hellenization as necessary for power and independence. By assimilation of this culture the most ambitious natives rose to power in Greek society, while the Greeks, by accepting the Hellenized natives, half-consciously deprived the native masses of leaders. The language of this culture was a new dialect called “common” Greek, an international tongue which was eventually to disseminate Greek philosophies and Near Eastern religions (including Judaism and Christianity).

The Greek elements of Hellenistic culture should not conceal its profound difference from the culture of classical Greece. Classical Greece had been a world of tiny city-states with conciliar governments. In the Hellenistic world many such cities survived, more were created, and some succeeded in preserving their independence. They were the centers from which Hellenistic culture radiated, but they did not dominate their culture, nor

was their civic life its main characteristic. Hellenistic culture was dominated by the big monarchies and characterized by the life of their capitals. These cosmopolitan cities were new sociological phenomena, far different from classical Athens, not to mention Sparta. In classical Greece the land had been held chiefly by private citizens in small estates; in the Hellenistic world the most important holdings were the vast domains of the kings, temples, and great officials. In classical Greece the cults of the city gods had been the center both of petition and of patriotism; in the Hellenistic world patriotism was expressed in the cults of the deified kings, and petitions were more often addressed to deities without political affiliations, like Asclepius, the god of healing. In the classical world, of small economic and political units, private citizens had been of considerable importance, politics had been a major concern of the average man, and the arts and philosophy had been politically oriented. In the larger Hellenistic world, private persons were usually of no importance—to be heard, they had to riot. In big cities like Alexandria, street mobs were the counterpart of the royal bureaucracy. Therefore private persons concerned themselves with their private affairs and “lived unnoticed,” as Epicurus advised them, and so did philosophy and art (except when motivated by political patronage). Finally, and for the same reason, in small cities, both of classical Greece and of the Hellenistic age, the civil administration and army (if any) were run by amateurs: the same man was in turn farmer, officer, judge, and so on. Therefore politics was full of factional conflicts. In the Hellenistic monarchies administration and army were run by professionals, and the history was one of bureaucratic intrigues and palace revolutions.

This increase in professionalism was characteristic of all fields of activity in the Hellenistic world. Its consequences were increased technical proficiency, the collection and systematization of previous knowledge, and the standardization of products, which improved in quality, but lost their individuality and originality. In geography Eratosthenes calculated the circumference of the earth with an error of less than 1 per cent; in astronomy Aristarchus of Samos propounded the heliocentric theory of the solar system. This was the age of the botanist Theophrastus, the mathematicians Euclid and Archimedes. On the other hand, pseudoscience invaded medicine, producing an increase in the practice of bleeding, which persisted to the middle of the nineteenth century and probably killed more patients than any diseases except the great plagues. Alchemy was another “discovery” of this age; astrology flourished. But in spite of such aberrations the collection and systematization of knowledge in all fields was the greatest achievement of the Hellenistic age. The structures of Hellenistic learning were to be the foundations of the Renaissance.

A second characteristic of the age was the innumerable technological

advances, from the appearance of the bill of exchange in banking, the water-lifting screw and the threshing drag in agriculture, the sternpost rudder in shipping, the copying machine in sculpture, down to the five-drachma-in-the-slot machine for dispensing holy water in Ptolemaic temples. Collectively the new technology much increased human power and efficiency. Indeed, the Hellenistic age may be symbolized by one of the most famous of these advances, the first known lighthouse, at the port of Alexandria, its fire is said to have been visible for 35 miles.

Finally, the new Hellenistic culture penetrated and changed the Near East, one of the greatest revolutions in ancient history. But it was a slow process. Greek styles in sculpture led the invasion, carried by coinage, terracotta and metal statuettes, and decorations on household objects. These were recommended by their lifelikeness—a virtue often most admired when least mastered. This penetration had already begun in the fifth and fourth centuries. With Alexander came the Greek language, Greek business practices and technology, and the experimental, inventive attitude which, for instance, revolutionized the agriculture of Egypt: better breeds of cattle and sheep, new crops, and better seeds for the old ones were introduced; iron at long last replaced bronze for common tools; irrigation was reorganized and greatly extended; more nutritious wheat flour replaced the ancient emmer—at least in the diet of the middle and upper classes. Under Ptolemy II daily rations of wheat or wheat bread were given to government officials and employees, including slaves.

Much slower was the spread of Greek civic life, both legal and cultural. When a city was founded for Greek settlers the citizens had to be given the rights customary in Greek cities—election of magistrates, their own assembly and courts, government by majority rule, a modicum of freedom of speech, freedom from enslavement for debt and from bodily punishment before conviction, the right to public trial, and so on. They also required the normal amenities of Greek life—a theater (which might double as an assembly place), an open market (colonnaded if possible), courts and gymnasia.* These rights and pleasures of Greek life were long limited to the few “citizens” of the new cities—Greeks without citizenship, natives, and slaves were carefully excluded. But the pattern gradually spread by extension to native Near Eastern cities. And even those natives who perpetuated their ancestral political forms were deeply influenced by Greek culture. The conventional image of Buddha is a creation of the Greek artistic tradition. The influence of the Greek cities of Syria and northern

* The gymnasium now changed from a social center for the adult to a secondary school. To athletic and military training were attached music, poetry, and rhetoric, the beginnings of “higher education.” These became necessary because the children’s Greek was corrupted by the native servants. Even girls had to be sent to school.

Mesopotamia made the later Aramaic (Syriac) culture of those areas the main instrument for the Hellenization of Islamic thought. And the Hellenization of Palestine by Greek cities shaped both Judaism and Christianity.

Slowest of all was the penetration of Greek literature and philosophy. The Greeks soon found educated natives to explain to them, in Greek, the contents of native traditions. The histories of Egypt and Babylon were even recast in something approaching Greek historical form for the Ptolemies and Seleucids by the third-century Egyptian priest Manetho and Babylonian priest Berossus; the Jewish law was translated into Greek, reportedly at the behest of Ptolemy II, who had many Jews to govern. Natives who had learned Greek even tried their hands at original literary compositions in Greek styles on native subjects—we have anti-Greek pamphlets written in Greek by Egyptians, and fragments of a Greek tragedy on the Exodus. Doubtless it was the prestige of Greek which worked against translation and imitation of Greek literature in native tongues. Anyone who aspired to write a literary work of a Greek sort aspired also to write it in Greek. Consequently the native literatures lived on through the Hellenistic and early Roman periods primarily by imitation of earlier native forms.

For Further Reading

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Classical Antiquity: Rome

18 The Roman Republic

In the summer of 204 Ptolemy IV of Egypt died, leaving a five-year-old son Philip V of Macedon and the Seleucid Antiochus III promptly moved to seize Ptolemaic territories. Antiochus occupied Palestine in 201; after some fighting the Seleucids held the country for half a century. Philip tried to take territories controlling the Hellespont. This frightened Athens, Rhodes, and Pergamum, and they appealed to Rome. Rome defeated Philip in 197 and stripped him of his domains outside Macedon. Though she left the Greek cities independent, the war gave her *de facto* control of Greece, and the Greeks turned to Antiochus for help. Rome then defeated him at Magnesia in 190.

The defeats of Philip and Antiochus began a new era in the political history of the eastern Mediterranean—the eight hundred and thirty years of Roman supremacy, from 190 B.C. to A.D. 640 (the Moslem capture of Alexandria). The stability of this power can be matched in Western history only by that of Egypt. Moreover, Rome in 200 B.C. had already existed for half a millennium and the Roman government lived on after 640 in the Byzantine empire for another eight hundred years. Roman political and legal thought has shaped every subsequent state of Europe and also those of European inspiration. Therefore the spotlight of Western history, hitherto focused on the Near East and Greece, now shifts to the Roman world.

The legends' about the origins of Rome, as of the Greek cities and Israelite tribes, may to some degree reflect what actually happened, but the degree is certainly small and not precisely calculable. Whatever the origins, there were some settlements on the Roman hills in the eighth century B.C. and the city was there by the end of the seventh. Its early history was distinguished by two most important characteristics—its willingness to

- B.C.
- 387 Rome destroyed by the Celts
 - 338 Rome in control of Latium
 - 268 Rome controls Italy south of the Po Valley
 - 264–241 First Punic war; most of Sicily made a province (the first)
 - 238 Sardinia and Corsica taken from Carthage
 - 218–202 Second Punic war (218–216 Hannibal's victories), plays of Plautus, earliest major works preserved from Latin literature
 - 204 Death of Ptolemy IV of Egypt
 - 201–198 Antiochus III takes Palestine
 - 200–197 Rome defeats Philip V of Macedon
 - 195–179,
 - 154–133 Roman subjugation of Spain
 - 184 Censorship of Cato, 1,000 talents spent on sewers
 - 181 Foundation of Aquileia; completion of the conquest of Italy south of the Alps
 - 167 Roman citizens freed of direct taxation
 - 149–146 Takeover of Macedonia and most of Greece, Corinth razed; third Punic war; destruction of Carthage, its territory annexed as the province of "Africa"; Punic works on agriculture translated into Latin by order of the senate
 - 144 First high-level aqueduct in Rome; introduction of hydraulic cement
 - 135 Big slave revolts begin (in Sicily)
 - 133 Tiberius Gracchus murdered
 - 129–102 Continued annexations: 129 the province of "Asia" (ex Pergamum), 122 the Balearics, 121 Narbonnese "Gaul," 105 Tripolitania, 102 Cilicia
 - 121 Gaius Gracchus murdered
 - 114 Marius enlists landless men for the army
 - 91–89 Revolt of the Italian allies (critical period)
 - 87–83 Sulla's subjugation of Greece and Asia (Athens ruined, Mithridates VI of Pontus defeated)
 - 81–79 Sulla's dictatorship (death, 78)
 - 67 Pompey suppresses piracy
 - 66–62 Pompey's defeat of Mithridates VI and Tigranes of Ar-

- menia, annexation of Bithynia and Pontus, Syria, Cilicia, and Crete
 - 58-50 Caesar's conquest of Gaul (France, Belgium, and parts of Holland, Germany, and Switzerland); flowering of Latin literature Lucretius, Catullus, Cicero, Caesar, glass blowing discovered in Syria
 - 48 Caesar defeats Pompey at Pharsalus
 - 48-47 Caesar in Egypt with Cleopatra VII
 - 46 Caesar's reform of the Roman calendar (introduction of the solar year)
 - 44 Caesar assassinated; Sallust retires from politics to the study of history
 - 43 Cicero murdered
 - 42 Caesar's assassins defeated at Philippi by Octavian and Mark Antony
 - 37 Antony's marriage to Cleopatra
 - 31 Battle of Actium, Antony and Cleopatra defeated, Octavian supreme
-

grant citizenship to aliens and its ability to unite other cities to itself. These gave it the manpower which overwhelmed the Hellenistic kingdoms and the political stability which carried it from the fifth century to the first without a revolution. By contrast the Greek cities, poor and democratic, could not afford to grant citizenship, which carried a share in the government and a claim on the food supply. In Rome, where the populace voted by blocks, an additional citizen meant only a very small fraction of a block's vote, and food, in fertile Italy, was not a critical problem. When a slave was enfranchised in a Greek city he became a resident alien and had no loyalty to the city. He might support a tyrant or an enemy. When a slave was enfranchised in Rome he became a Roman citizen, albeit of the lowest class, and his children would be of higher station. Rome, when it defeated a rival, could afford to take the citizens as well as the land. The manpower would be an advantage in its next war, and the new citizens would find some consolation for their former defeat in their profits from the following victory. Similar considerations cemented alliances. Many of Rome's "allies" were acquired by force, like Athens', but, unlike Athens', once in the gang they shared in the loot. Moreover, Rome, itself an oligarchy, supported the local aristocrats, made them dependent on its support, and allied them to its own ruling class through intermarriage. And revolts brought terrible punishments.

In 387–386 a Celtic invasion destroyed both the city and its records. Records can hardly have been plentiful in any case, for although writing was known in the area from the seventh century on, literacy did not become common until late in the third. For the period prior to the Celtic raid, therefore, we have only legends. After the Celtic raid we can trace with more confidence the areas Rome assimilated or allied to itself. First came the Latin towns south of the Tiber (by 338), then the Samnites of central Italy (by 290), then the Etruscans to the north and the Greek cities of the southern coasts. By 268 it controlled the entire peninsula south of the Po Valley and the northwestern Apennines, and had united its territories by a network of colonies.

By this time Rome's unite-and-share-the-plunder policy had made it the keeper of a military man-eater which none of its neighbors could defeat, but which had to be fed with plunder if it was not to turn on its keeper. Sicily was the richest country at hand. Since much of Sicily was occupied by the Carthaginians (in Latin, *Poeni*), intervention there led to a struggle with Carthage in two long "Punic" wars, 264–241 and 218–202. Rome's victory in both was due to her superiority in manpower and her ability to hold her allies. In the first war she lost 700 ships (manned by 140,000 men) to the Carthaginians' 500, but nonetheless forced Carthage to sue for peace. In the second war, when the Carthaginian general Hannibal invaded Italy with 26,000 men, Rome had available for service 273,000 Roman citizens and 379,000 allies. Therefore, although Hannibal smashed three Roman armies in succession at Trevia (218), Trasimene (217), and Cannae (216), and although these victories won him support from the Celts of the Po Valley and the Greek cities of south Italy, his invasion finally failed because the bulk of the allies remained loyal to Rome. He never won over enough troops to attack the city. Rome was able to keep one army on his trail and send other armies to conquer Carthaginian Spain, suppress a revolt in Sicily, keep Macedon busy in Greece, reconquer the Po Valley, reconquer south Italy, and finally invade North Africa. And the war with Carthage was so far from exhausting her that she was able to defeat Macedon in 197 and Antiochus in 190.

But now the common interest of Rome and its allies in plunder changed the Roman system. Big enough to defeat anything in sight, it no longer wanted more members. The more members, the less plunder per member. Therefore, beginning with Sicily in the first Punic war, conquered cities were no longer customarily made allies, nor were conquered lands customarily used for the foundation of new colonies in which allies as well as Romans received grants. Instead, the newly acquired territories were now organized as provinces. Allies generally contributed military service but were self-governing in domestic affairs, had certain rights guaranteed

by treaties in relation to Rome, and were free of tribute; provincials were usually free of military service, but subject to Roman governors, devoid of civic rights, and obligated to pay tribute. The change from alliance and colonization to the creation of provinces was not uniform—almost nothing in the administrative history of the Roman republic was—but it was frequent from 250 on, and after 175 it was general.

This change cut off the largest item in the allies' benefit from the wars—the distribution of land to colonies in which they participated. It greatly increased Rome's profit. Not only was the tribute of the provinces paid to Rome, but Rome farmed to private companies the task of collecting the tribute. These companies raised the necessary capital by selling stock, then recovered their outlay by seizing as "tribute" all they could get. Their rapacity yielded high returns. It also led to innumerable suits between Romans and provincials. Of these, and of most other civil cases in the province, the Roman governor was the final judge. Governors served without salary (Rome, like most ancient cities, thought public offices honors for which the recipients should pay). But they had a generous allowance for expenses. The parsimonious but honest Cicero saved the equivalent of \$540,000 from his allowance as governor of a minor province for two years. And this was nothing to what a dishonest man could make from bribes. Besides the profits of administration, Rome and her generals got the lion's share of the booty and the cash payments extracted from the defeated, payments which, from the Punic Wars on, were greatly increased. Finally, the accumulation of capital in Rome made the Romans the principal partners in companies which supplied the needs of the Roman army and navy. In these, and in the tax-collecting companies, the wealthy families of the allies also participated; under Roman protection the Italian allies, particularly the Greeks, took over most of the trade of Greece and Asia Minor, and many of their poor relations were employed as agents of the tax-collecting companies. But most of the poorer citizens of the allied towns were burdened with the fighting and rewarded only with the soldier's miserable pay and trivial booty.

Along with the allies, many Roman citizens were alienated from their government. Rome had long ago gone through the customary evolution from a kingship to an oligarchy of "patrician" families. During the fifth and fourth centuries popular leaders had opened the civic offices and priest-hoods to nonpatrician candidates. But here the movement toward democracy had stopped. The final authorities in the state were several assemblies of citizens who voted not by individuals but by companies or tribes. The rulers so gerrymandered these voting units that most could be swung by the few rich voters. Moreover, the wide geographic distribution of the citizens made assemblies difficult to attend and easy to control. And

their powers were strictly limited. Bills had to be accepted or rejected without amendment. The presiding magistrate sat, the assembly stood. Control even of general policy by the assemblies was therefore out of the question. But the principal offices of the state were annual, and most could not be held twice. Therefore the officers could not long control policy either. Thus control fell into the hands of the senate, nominally an advisory council composed of the former holders of the four highest offices. Almost all senators came from wealthy landowning families. Their vast profits as generals and governors were invested almost entirely in land, and the price of land skyrocketed.

Small landowners formed the bulk of the army. Throughout the ancient world it was customary to admit to a city's army only men with a minimal landholding. The men had to provide their own weapons, property was a guarantee of patriotism, and only responsible citizens could be permitted in the military organization which controlled the state. During Hannibal's invasion many farms had been ruined by pillage or neglect. The wars threw vast numbers of slaves on the market, and the exploitation of Sicily provided cheap grain. The soldier returning to his ruined farm found himself facing ruinous competition. (Roman methods of slave management were remarkable for inhuman economy; on big estates slaves were kept in prisons, treated as animals, and worked, not until they dropped, but until their efficiency dropped. Then they were sold, usually to the state mines, where conditions were harder and the mortality rate necessitated the purchase of the very cheapest slaves—the supply of condemned criminals did not suffice.) Given such competition, many small landowners sold out (for the excellent prices their senatorial neighbors offered), went up to Rome, and, when their money was gone, swelled the mass of the unemployed.

Between the small landowners and the senators were the bourgeois families of means. They were not very numerous—in 225, about 23,000 out of 273,000 citizens (adult males). Nor were most of them very rich; anyone who had more than \$100,000 capital was included in the class. But some of the bourgeois made huge fortunes in trade and as war contractors, and most of them bought shares in the tax-collecting companies. Consequently they were happy to have the tax-collecting companies loot the provincials. On the other hand the senatorial families extended to the provinces the policy of protecting the local aristocracies. And some senators, as governors of provinces, were sufficiently honest to provide the protection for which the provincials paid them. Accordingly, as tax-collecting companies were sued for extortion or governors for taking bribes, conflict after conflict arose between the senators and the bourgeois. The class feeling of each group was sharpened, and the senatorial families (the

nobiles—well known) used their influence to prevent outsiders from securing high government offices. This embittered the capable bourgeois, who made fortunes of senatorial size but were excluded from political power and social prestige.

Thus the economic consequences of Rome's success made the allies discontented and envious, ruined the small farmers, and created among the ruling classes a sharp rift between business on the one hand, government and landowning on the other. The ruined farmers became a huge city mob, ready for any violence. At the same time, the wars created an enormous population of desperate slaves, both in the cities and in the countryside, and the victories surrounded Italy with a ring of provinces in which all Italians were hated, but Romans most.

This situation developed slowly, and while it developed, Rome's policy of plunder steadily extended the area of its control. The Punic Wars had brought in Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, and Carthaginian Spain. This last was a great economic prize because of its rich silver and lead mines; holdings there were consolidated and extended by continuous wars against the natives down to 179 and again from 154 to 133. The Po Valley was conquered between the Punic Wars and reconquered after the second, then Roman territories were pushed north to the head of the Adriatic, where Aquileia was founded in 181. In 149 anti-Roman revolts brought the annexation of Macedon and in 146 of the rest of Greece; Corinth, which had led the resistance, was destroyed, and only a few favored cities (Athens, Sparta, Delphi) remained allies. At the same time, Carthage was forced into war and destroyed and its territory annexed as the province of "Africa" (146). In 133 the last ruler of Pergamum left his state to Rome on the condition that she protect its independence; after a revolt in 129 it was made the province of "Asia." The Balearic Islands were taken in 122, the district around Narbonne in 121, Tripolitania in 105, Cilicia in 102.

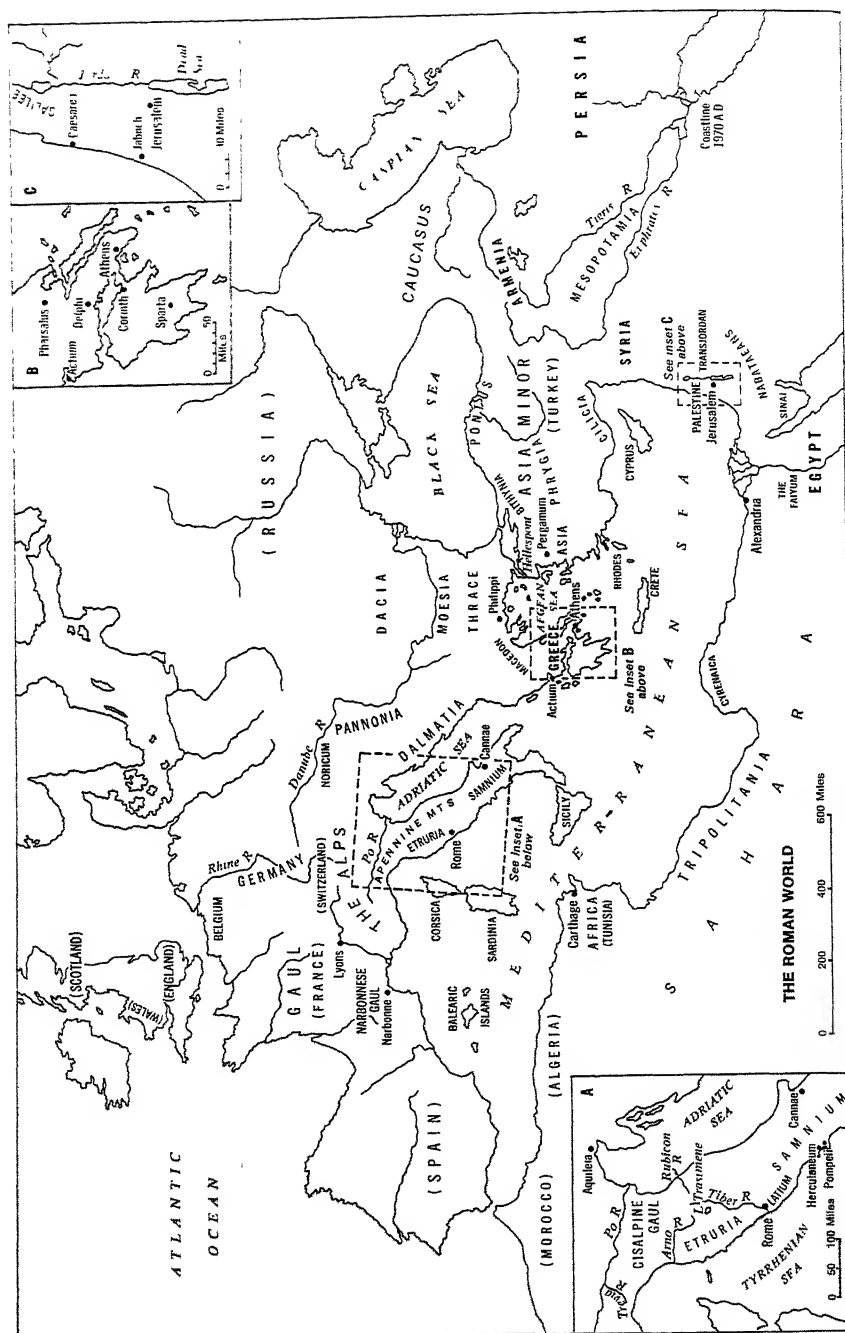
By this time, however, the friction between the parts of the Roman machine had become so great that the whole was about to burst into flame. A series of slave revolts—the first in Sicily from 135 to 132—were inconveniences rather than dangers, for not even the provincials would commonly join with slaves. Indeed, a big slave revolt in a province made the provincials sensible of their dependence on Rome for protection. More serious was the revolt of the Italian allies in 91. Rome defeated this by granting most of the demands which had occasioned it, notably for Roman citizenship. She began by rewarding those who remained loyal, then won over by generous terms the less resolute of the rebels, finally made examples of the most determined. Divide and conquer had always been her policy. The crisis was past by 89; the fighting went on for a while thereafter.

Rome ceded more easily to the demand for citizenship because her supply of citizen soldiers had continued to dwindle, and her mob of citizens without property, to grow. Of the attempts to reverse these changes the most famous were those of the Gracchi brothers in 133 and 123. Relying on bourgeois support, they advocated extension of citizenship to the allies, resettlement of small farmers on public land (hitherto rented to senators at minimal rates) resumption of colonization, and provision of grain at less than market rates to feed the Roman poor, pending their resettlement. The longest-lived of these measures was the last most of the Roman mob preferred poverty and indolence in Rome to the hard work of a small farmer, and when one party began to bribe them with public money, the other could not offer less, so cheap grain gradually became free grain, and other "relief" measures went on increasing through the centuries until the imperial government broke down.

After the introduction of poor relief, the Gracchi's most important achievement was to get themselves murdered by their senatorial opponents. This produced an enduring feud between the majority of the senators and a Gracchan minority supported by the bulk of the bourgeoisie. The majority also had their bourgeois supporters, and both sides, with varying success, bid for the mob. There was no clear-cut class struggle. But the security of senatorial rule gave way to bitter party battles in which anything could happen.

What did happen was that a popular and capable bourgeois general named Marius found a way to raise plenty of troops and good ones—he simply enrolled any men he could get, asking no questions about property and preferring those who looked like good fighters. Such men, largely from the rural proletariat, had little financial interest in the Roman state and less concern for it. They were not a citizen militia, but a body of professional soldiers, fighting not for Rome, but for money. Their pay was minimal, and the senate, with tight-fisted, Roman stupidity, would do nothing significant to increase it. The state was chronically short of money because the senate would not consent to tax Romans—they had abolished direct taxation of citizens in 167. Nor would they permit the soldier to rise from the ranks—officers must be of bourgeois fortune or better. So pay was fixed. Beyond pay came booty, which depended on victory, which depended on the general. Finally, the soldiers might hope for some special reward provided their general won his war and had sufficient political influence to persuade the senate to grant his soldiers land. Therefore the soldiers were loyal to their generals, not to the senate.

Other generals followed Marius' example. They and their armies were soon fighting for control of the state. Each general, when in power, declared his chief opponents public enemies and put prices on their heads.



Fortunately for the senate, the ultimate victor was one of their party, Sulla, who had trained a devoted army in the east. There he had ruined Athens, suppressed a revolt in Asia (the provincials murdered some 80,000 Italian residents), and forced Mithridates VI of Pontus, who had inspired the revolt, back to his own dominions. After returning to Italy in 83, and defeating his opponents and capturing Rome in 82, Sulla liquidated his enemies, restored control to the senate, retired to private life in 79, and died the following year without having done anything to alter the basic conditions which produced the conflicts. These, therefore, were soon resumed. This time, after considerable jockeying, the two generals who emerged as leaders were Pompey and Julius Caesar.

Pompey had crushed a Spanish revolt in 72, put down piracy, a pan-Mediterranean plague in 67, finished off Mithridates of Pontus and Tigranes of Armenia in 66, and in 63 constituted, from conquered territory, the provinces Bithynia and Pontus, and Syria. He brought back his army to Italy in 62 and, after some political haggling, was able to settle it on grants of public land (59).

Caesar, at that time a political ally of Pompey's, was rewarded for his alliance with the governorship of the Gallic (Celtic) provinces in the Po Valley and France. Thence he conquered the rest of France, Belgium, and bits of Holland, Germany, and Switzerland. He then broke with Pompey and, at the end of 50, was poised in the Po Valley, ready to descend on Rome. Pompey's army, meanwhile, already old in 62, had grown twelve years older and was nine years out of training. And Pompey had done nothing even to reassemble it. When Caesar crossed the Rubicon and invaded Italy, Pompey and the senators fled to Greece. Here they organized an impromptu army which was defeated by Caesar's veterans at Pharsalus in 48. Pompey fled to Egypt and was there murdered. Caesar followed him to Egypt and met Cleopatra VII. She was twenty-two at the time, he, fifty-four. He restored her to the throne; she named the baby Ptolemy Caesar. Caesar meanwhile returned to Rome in 47. In 46 he defeated the senatorial forces in Africa, in 45 the Pompeian forces in Spain. On March 15, 44, he was murdered.

Caesar had not wished to break entirely with the old order and had therefore, on his return to Rome, reconstituted a rump senate consisting of all but his most determined opponents. To this senate the rule of the state reverted after his assassination, but not for long. Caesar's army was on hand, waiting to be paid and anxious to avenge him. The senate, desperately anxious to effect a balance of power, allowed his murderers to take over the governorships of the eastern provinces, where they raised armies. Meanwhile, Caesar's officers, Mark Antony and Lepidus, put themselves at the head of armies in western Gaul and Spain; his nephew Octavius, whom

he had adopted in his will (hence the change of his name to Caesar Octavian), won the support of his veterans in Italy. By the end of 43 Octavian, Antony, and Lepidus had allied and forced the senate to give them sweeping powers for constitutional reform. The first things swept away were their senatorial opponents, who were proscribed as public enemies and mostly murdered. The eastern armies were defeated at Philippi in 42. Thereafter the alliance degenerated into a rivalry between Octavian, who controlled the west, and Antony, who controlled the eastern provinces and Egypt—he married Cleopatra in 37. (Lepidus retired to the priesthood and to drink.) The resultant war was settled by the battle of Actium on September 2, 31. Antony and Cleopatra committed suicide in 30, and Octavian reached Alexandria. Cleopatra had prepared a fleet to take Ptolemy Caesar, now sixteen, to India, but Octavian persuaded the boy to return and had him murdered.

Octavian did not annex Egypt to the territories of Rome, but subjected it to himself. He also took over the remains of Antony's army. Now there was no military force in the Mediterranean world capable of standing against that of which he was the commander (*imperator*, whence the title "emperor"). Legally he was an official of the Roman republic, but in fact the republic had ended.

Paradoxically, our intellectual debt to republican Rome is far greater than its intellectual achievement. The early Romans had little respect for literature, art, and science; these were not the proper concerns of a Roman gentleman. When they did become fashionable, it was largely through the influence of Greek house slaves, following the conquest of south Italy. Therefore it was the Greek forms which became fashionable; old Roman work was almost wholly lost. The new imitations of Greek works were at first in Greek; Latin was a peasant language with few words for abstract thought: "sincerity," for instance, is properly a quality of honey unmixed with wax; the word *felix* which came to mean "fortunate" originally meant "fertile." But in the theater, to reach a popular audience, Latin had to be used. So the earliest considerable pieces preserved from Latin literature are the plays of Plautus, from about the end of the second Punic war, and these are all imitations or adaptations of Greek comedies. So are those of Terence, a half-century later, who follows Plautus, like a dancing master following a drunken sailor.

Since so little is preserved of Hellenistic comedy the works of Plautus and Terence are among the chief sources for our knowledge of the later Greek theater and were the models which inspired the revival of classical comedy in the Renaissance. Similarly in philosophy our most extensive connected exposition of Epicureanism comes from the Latin poem of Lucretius (a contemporary of Pompey), while the philosophical works of

Cicero (murdered in 43 on the orders of Octavian and Antony) are one of the best sources for our knowledge of second- and first-century Stoicism. Catullus, of the same generation, shows what Greek erotic poetry must have been for passion and directness. Sallust, one of Caesar's henchmen, gives a fair imitation of Greek historical techniques, and Cicero's speeches are products of Greek rhetoric. This is not to say these authors had no virtues of their own—the peasant vigor of Plautus, the romanticism which breaks through Lucretius' rationalism, the surprising tenderness of Catullus, the urbanity and worldly wisdom of Cicero are peculiar to these authors, but the major elements in their works are Greek. Their chief contribution to intellectual and artistic history is this transmission of Greek elements to the Latin West, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the schoolboys of modern times. Perhaps the most original things we have from the period are Cato's work on agriculture, an unrivaled expression of Latin peasant mentality, and Caesar's report of his Gallic wars, an adaptation of historical form to the needs of political propaganda, written in the terse Latin of a Roman aristocrat and electric with the charge of a great analytical mind. But if we look for originality beyond such personal characteristics, we find little. Cicero does show us a new stage in the history of philosophy—the return of philosophy from the professional philosopher to the man of the world; its practice as part of the life of a distinguished barrister and politician. Here the force of Cicero's example, especially in wedding philosophy to legal rhetoric, was of great importance. So was his development of Latin prose style and vocabulary for the expression of philosophic ideas—whose ideas they were does not matter. Once Cicero had created the language, Augustine could think in it.

In the fine arts the one great achievement of the republican period was ruthless portraiture. One look at the stony faces of their funerary statues explains the terrible realism of their foreign policy and slave economy. But in the applied arts few peoples have so distinguished achievements. Their roads, bridges, and aqueducts, some of which are still in use, are masterpieces of functional form and original thought. The arch had been known for millennia, but the Romans were the first to realize its possibilities, both for beauty and for utility, for bridges, monumental entrances, and the creation of vast, open interiors. It was function that the Romans themselves admired. Aqueducts, said Pliny, are more valuable than useless pyramids. But like the pyramids, these great public works were enormously costly: only the vast capital accumulation and cheap labor supply of Rome made their construction possible. The standard road, for instance, was 15 feet wide and, with its foundations, 4 feet deep; each foot of length, therefore, required 60 cubic feet of construction: first a layer of flagstones, then a bed of rubble, then a layer of concrete, and on top a surface of concrete,

squared stone, or pounded gravel. Moreover, the roads did not follow previous tracks, but were laid out to run as straight as possible and with minimal gradients; this required much cutting, filling, terracing, and bridge building. In the Hellenistic world there had been almost no paved roads. The Roman network was built for military movements and official messengers, but, once built, facilitated a great increase of trade.

Cities, too, bear the marks of the Roman practical genius. Roman architects loved balance and grandeur; with the money and labor at their disposal they were able to cut and terrace and fill and produce great squares and vistas with monumental buildings on either side, in a fashion far beyond the means of their Hellenistic predecessors. The repertory of Hellenistic forms—porticoes, temples, and so on—was taken over, the units immensely enlarged, and new forms developed, especially for public entertainment, a major concern of the big cities. The Roman formula for management of the mob was “bread and circuses.” The circus, primarily a track for chariot races, was a new architectural form. The enlarged theater was no longer a hollowed-out hillside, but a free-standing building in which an artificial hillside of seats confronted a many-tiered stage, loaded with architectural decorations, though still shallow by modern standards. At the end of the republic appeared the amphitheater, used especially for gladiatorial games. (The practice of making men fight animals or each other for public amusement was developed by the Romans on a scale unparalleled. Large numbers of trained gladiators were kept by Rome and other cities and by private individuals. Prisoners of war and condemned criminals were used without special training. These shows were the most popular form of public entertainment from the second century B.C. to the third A.D. The tradition survives in bullfighting.) Perhaps the most important creation of Roman public architecture, however, was the sewer. Underground sewage had hitherto been rare. The development was forced on the Romans first by the location of their city in valleys between a number of sharp hills, then by its great size. Underground sewage, in turn, made possible the maintenance of larger cities, which otherwise would have been decimated by disease. With sewage, in importance, went water supply. Aqueducts made possible, and tolerable, the expansion of city populations far beyond their previous numbers.

In private architecture, as in public, the Romans excelled in functional buildings—huge warehouses and towering blocks of one- and two-room tenements, easier to admire than to live in. Standard blocks of such tenements appear as part of the city planning of Roman colonies in the third century B.C. The increase of city population in such housing led to a new distribution of services. Instead of separate markets and residential districts, there were small shops lining the ground floor fronts of the tene-

ments, to supply the residents' everyday needs. We know little of the houses of the rich, save that they steadily increased in magnificence—and therefore rapidly became obsolete and were rebuilt. A house which in 78 B.C. was thought the finest in Rome was merely an average house thirty-five years later. Cicero spent about \$700,000 for his town house and said that one could not live as a gentleman on less than \$120,000 a year. Even more magnificent were the country places which, at the end of the republic, began to be surrounded with elaborate gardens. Some of them, like Cicero's eight, were merely businessmen's pleasure places of a couple of hundred acres, but others were vast estates, centers of manufacturing as well as farming, dependent on the outside world only for luxuries.

Roman building was made possible by the discovery of cement which would harden under water and was therefore far superior to the previous lime mortar. It was perhaps the most important of Roman technological discoveries, though rivaled by glass blowing and the introduction of water mills and windmills and also of rotary mills which made possible the use of animals to grind grain. The senate was concerned about agricultural techniques and in 146 ordered the translation into Latin of a 28-volume Punic work on agriculture. Here both Romans and Carthaginians were indebted to Greek achievements. A debt to Egypt was the solar calendar of 365 days, introduced (and corrected with an additional day every fourth year) by Caesar to replace the Roman lunar calendar with its wild irregularities.

Warfare, however, the Romans themselves revolutionized. For the thrusting spear of the Greek soldier they substituted the throwing spear. After their shower of spears had broken the enemy's ranks they finished the fight at close quarters with a short sword, edged and pointed for both cut and thrust. Both spear throwing and swordplay required space, so they abandoned the Greek phalanx and developed an open formation of small groups of men. This had several advantages: Fresh fighters could move up to replace the weary and wounded; forces could easily be shifted sideways; adaptation to irregular terrain was easier.

The most important of Roman technical advances, however, was the development of jurisprudence, the technique of legal interpretation which enabled its practitioners to decide whether and with what effect a general law would apply in a given case. Such questions had always faced judges and juries wherever actions were judged and disputes settled in accordance with fixed laws. In Rome, however, their settlement became the province of a special group of private individuals called *jurisconsults*, at first members of senatorial families, who were recognized experts on the meanings of the laws. Their opinions gradually acquired almost the force of law because a judge was limited in practice to choice between the opinions submitted to him by *jurisconsults*. Furthermore, judges themselves, as well as contesting

parties, frequently solicited opinions from juriconsults. The chief judicial officer of Rome (the "urban praetor") annually, on entering his office, issued an edict indicating the rules he would apply in court; these rules soon became traditional, and many were based on, or shaped by, the opinions of juriconsults. The origins of this development were two: First was the extreme brevity and consequent obscurity of the early Roman laws, which necessitated expert interpretation. Second was the prestige of the great Roman families, which made the small man seek support by soliciting from one of their members a favorable opinion on his case. But when each party to a case came prepared with an opinion of a noble supporter, the opinion which prevailed would be that of the supporter recognized as an authority on the law. Thus the prestige of learning was distinguished from that of position; it came also to be independent of politics.

The content of this learning was primarily tradition. Laws were to be interpreted as they had been in the past. To learn the tradition one had to frequent the house of a jurist, watch him in action, and talk with him. When Greek philosophy became popular in Rome, particularly in the age of Cicero (who was not a jurist, but a barrister), the jurists applied philosophical methods—exact definition, classification, logical inference—to the topics of Roman law and thus transformed the isolated traditions of their predecessors into a legal system. But they shunned pure theory and legal philosophy. They did not question the validity of institutions or established rules. Their concern was to determine how the rules would apply in particular cases. By such determination in many exemplary cases they made the meaning of the law predictable and the same for all. This rivals the political union of the Mediterranean world as the greatest achievement of the Roman republic.

For Further Reading

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19 The Augustan Empire

During the thirteen years of war between Octavian's appearance as Caesar's heir and his final defeat of Antony (44–31) his soldiers had repeatedly taken advantage of his difficulties to drive hard bargains. His major concern, therefore, once he got rid of Antony, was to free himself from dependence on the army, without losing its loyalty.

The first step was to reduce its size. After taking over Antony's forces he had about 500,000 men under arms. Of these, he tells us, "I settled in colonies or sent back to their own cities a little more than 300,000, and to all of these I allotted lands or granted money as rewards for military service." The lands and money came mostly from the expropriation of his opponents' properties. Since most of the soldiers were Italians and were settled in Italy, their presence now guaranteed his security. By the time of his death the army had been reduced to 175,000 men, mostly distributed along a frontier of some 7,000 miles. Pay and pensions, both good, came from him; the commanding officers were his appointees and were shifted frequently so they could not build personal followings among the soldiers.

Along with reduction of the army Octavian had to strengthen his position in other ways. The first was to make his power legal—a matter of great importance to Roman opinion. He therefore had himself voted by the senate such powers as he needed, being careful to have them covered by republican titles. The "republican" government went on much as before, only the officials were his nominees and did what he told them. Thus the façade of legality was preserved.

He was equally aware of the importance of practical interests and appealed to those of the Roman mob, the bourgeoisie, the senate, and the provincials.

The mob was venal by tradition, so he could, and did, proceed by direct donatives from his spoils to each citizen. Moreover, he reorganized the grain supply, using the grain of Egypt, on a lavish scale. The water supply, too, was vastly improved by new aqueducts. He provided games and other public entertainments and spectacles of unprecedented magnificence. An enormous building program beautified the city and made work for those who wanted it. But Octavian was not one to trust to gratitude. His benefactions were backed up by a quadruple set of guards to keep one another, as well as the citizens, in check. There were two bodies of his own "praetorian" guards as well as guards of the city, and police and fire brigades—the first such forces Rome ever had. Finally, to prevent trouble,

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| B.C. | 31 | Battle of Actium, Octavian victorious |
| 31–A.D. 68 | | The Julio-Claudian dynasty (Augustus, his stepson Tiberius Claudius, and members of Tiberius' family), the classical age of Latin literature: Vergil, Horace, Livy, Ovid, Seneca, Petronius; Philo of Alexandria reconciles Judaism with Greek philosophy |
| | 28 | Purge of the senate. Octavian <i>princeps</i> |
| | 27 | Crisis officially over, governorships of unarmed provinces restored to the senate, Octavian voted the title "Augustus" |
| A.D. | 6 | Judea taken over by the Romans, revolutionary "messianic" movements development |
| | c 30 | Jesus crucified |
| | 43–85 | Conquest of Britain |
| | 60 | Paul sent to Rome for trial |
| | 64 | The great fire in Rome, Nero's persecution of the Christians |
| | 66 | Jewish revolt in Palestine |
| | 69–96 | Flavian dynasty (Titus Flavius Vespasianus, and his sons Titus and Domitian) |
| | 70 | Destruction of the temple of Jerusalem, end of the sacrificial cult prescribed by the Old Testament, end of the priestly aristocracy; ben Zakkai's court in Jabneh becomes the center of Pharisaic law and piety |

popular assemblies and elections of officers were reduced to formalities and the choice of candidates was controlled.

The bourgeois were easy to win over. Caesar had been popular with them; Octavian succeeded to his popularity and did much to deserve it. Of Italian bourgeois background himself, he gave many bourgeois, mostly from Italian cities, places in the senate. For many more he created places as financial inspectors or even governors of minor provinces. And for the most successful there were the important "prefectures"—praetorian prefect, prefect of the grain supply, or prefect of Egypt (which was always governed by a man of bourgeois rank; no senator was permitted to set foot in it without permission of Octavian).

- 75-100 The four Gospels written
- 79 Eruption of Vesuvius, destruction of Pompeii
- 96-180 "The five good emperors" (Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, Antoninus Pius, Marcus Aurelius), cooperation of senate and *princeps*; the principate passed on by adoption of competent men; Latin satire and history: Martial, Juvenal, Tacitus, Suetonius; Greek historians and philosophers Epictetus, Arrian, Plutarch, Appian, Romance and parody: Apuleius and Lucian
- 101-106 Trajan's conquest of Dacia
- 105-106 Annexation of "Arabia" (the Nabataean kingdom)
- 113-117 Trajan's conquest of Armenia and Mesopotamia
- 115-117 Revolt and destruction of the Jews in Cyrenaica, Egypt, and Cyprus
- 118 Hadrian, Trajan's successor, abandons most of Mesopotamia and Armenia
- 131-135 Revolt of bar Kosiba, Judaism in south Palestine wiped out
- 180-192 Commodus, son of Marcus Aurelius; accord between senate and *princeps* breaks down
- 193-235 Severan dynasty (Septimius Severus, his two sons and two grand-nephews); Augustan order gradually disintegrates
- c. 200 Codification of Jewish law in the Mishnah by Rabbi Judah the Prince

The senate, in fact, was the most difficult problem. Many senators resented their loss of real power. Many resented Octavian as an upstart, from bourgeois and Italian, not Roman, stock. Yet if the façade of legality was to be maintained, if his rule was not to degenerate into a tyranny (and, consequently, remain dependent on the army), the cooperation of the senate had to be secured. Votes were no problem. The senate could be—and was—packed with subservient appointees. But the surviving "genuine" senators were men of widely influential families and vast wealth. They could not be ignored. They had to be either conciliated or exterminated.

Since the senators were anxious not to be exterminated, Octavian's policy of conciliation succeeded. He purged the senate in 28 of its "un-

worthy" members, but at the same time made himself its leader (*princeps*, whence "prince") and made clear that he expected to govern with it. Here pride and the maintenance of appearances were of great importance. Octavian was careful to treat the senators with the greatest politeness and to maintain every detail of the traditional *decorum*—a Roman word and a major Roman concern. He scrupulously consulted the senate about unimportant questions.

Of important questions the most difficult was control of the provinces, since the governors of the provinces commanded the armies there. Provincial governorships had been the most valuable rewards of a public career; the senate would never relinquish them; nor would Octavian relinquish control of the army. The solution was reached in 27 B.C. Octavian retained command of all those provinces in which considerable forces had to be stationed, but governed them by delegates whom he appointed from the senate. The remaining governors were appointed by the senate. In gratitude the senate voted him the title *Augustus*—"the revered."

This was not quite deification. Octavian had had Caesar deified by the senate in 42 and had since been officially "the son of the god"—by adoption. The new title brought him a step nearer deity. He refused official deification—it would have offended the senators, who would have had to participate in the official worship—but he made himself, even for the senate, an object of religious awe. Provincials were permitted to worship him.

For the senate, however, the most important object of religious awe was Rome itself. Augustus therefore made himself the protector of the Roman tradition and above all of religion. Roman religion had always been somewhat impersonal. A superstitious reverence for "the proper way of doing things" was the strongest religious experience of the average Roman. Republican government had been largely a structure of rituals. As a successful revolutionary, Augustus hoped to revive the respect for such rituals—in others. He saw in reverence for the established order a bulwark for his regime. He therefore made himself patron of the old Roman family life (laws encouraging marriage and childbearing, penalizing celibacy and adultery), traditional class distinctions (laws limiting manumission of slaves, prohibiting intermarriage of freedmen with senatorial families), and ancient religious ceremonies (82 temples rebuilt, old priesthoods revived, cult associations encouraged, domestic worship restored by law). Horace and Vergil were set to writing verses glorifying Augustus, the origins of Rome, the simple, rural, Roman life, the pleasures of patriotism, and the propriety of dying for one's country. Livy retold Roman history in cinematic style. With imperial favor these works became the classics of secondary instruction. It is difficult to estimate their influence on the Western

mind; they are so much part of us that we take their values for granted and their epigrams for truisms. For Augustus' purpose they expressed the Roman tradition in the Roman language and provided a Roman literature to distract the upper classes from Greek free thought and rally them to the ancient Roman order as represented by his regime.

In the provinces the cult of Rome spread widely, hand in hand with that of Augustus. Nor was it all flattery. In Greek *romé* means "strength," and to the ancient mind the rise and rule of Rome might well seem the work of a supernatural power which had become, through Augustus, the protectress of the world. The provincials had been almost ruined by the civil wars and therefore saw the maintenance of peace as the greatest of virtues. Augustus was sincerely hailed as "the savior of the world." Moreover, he was interested in the prosperity of the provinces—they were his domain. His bourgeois financial inspectors checked with expert eyes on tax collectors and governors alike. His control of the senate and of elections enabled him to prevent the appointment of unsuitable governors even for the senatorial provinces, while the provinces under his direct control were governed by his own appointees ("legates") whom he held strictly to account. In general his reign marked the beginning of tranquil and comparatively just government for the provinces. The wealthy provincial families had most to gain from social stability at home and international peace. The one protected their land ownership and their loans; the other improved conditions for trade. Many already had ties with Roman aristocrats. They backed Augustus. The poor hated the tax collectors and the foreign officials, and dreamed of a time when they would again be free. But meanwhile they acquiesced.

Thus Augustus had escaped the army's control. The army had been cut down and split up, and other supports had been found for his regime in the settlements of his veterans, the Roman mob, the Italian bourgeoisie, the remodeled senate, and the wealthy families of the provinces. But the army still existed. Professional training and tactical knowledge made it far superior to any citizen force that could be mustered against it. It remained the ultimate basis of the emperor's power, but also a constant threat to it. For should the newly established concord break down, the emperor would be forced to fall back on the army and in so doing would fall again into its control. After Augustus' death this happened from time to time, but the pattern he had created survived as the "formal cause" of the empire at least to the fall of the Severan dynasty in 235. Until then political history was one of adjustments as various elements of the complex increased or diminished in power.

These adjustments we need not follow in detail. In outline there were three periods. From Augustus' death until A.D. 96 relations between the

emperors and the senate were more or less strained; consequently much administration came to be done by the emperor's secretaries. The senate, denied power, turned to conspiracies, Stoic philosophizing about the natural liberty of man, and vicious gossip about the emperors. This led to executions for treason, many senatorial families were extinguished, the richer bourgeoisie were decimated, and the imperial estates were vastly increased by confiscations. This policy increased the emperors' dependence on the troops stationed in Rome, especially the praetorian guard, which took advantage of the situation to extort privileges and money. Jealousy of the praetorians and knowledge of the weakness of the emperor's position tempted the frontier armies to revolt. Revolts under Nero in A.D. 68 ended the so-called Julio-Claudian dynasty (of Augustus' wife's family) and installed the "Flavians"—Vespasian, a popular general, succeeded by his sons Titus and Domitian. Under Domitian the government again degenerated to a terror.

With the assassination of Domitian in 96, however, the senate succeeded in installing a candidate of its own, Nerva, who promptly secured his position by adopting as successor a successful frontier general, Trajan. Trajan further strengthened the imperial office by commanding his troops in person. The conquests of Dacia (western Rumania) and "Arabia" (roughly, east and south Transjordan and Sinai) yielded enormous loot which financed gifts to the troops and the Roman mob, games, and a building program, especially of roads. The senate, by intermarriage and imperial appointment, gradually came to be more representative of the wealthy families of all the western provinces; provincial interest strengthened its support for the emperor. The Stoics discovered that true freedom was not political, but moral, and that the emperor was the servant of divine reason to maintain order on earth. The resultant concord lasted through the reigns of Trajan's three successors—Hadrian (117–138), Antoninus Pius (138–161), and Marcus Aurelius Antoninus (161–180)—and might have lasted longer had not Marcus' son, Commodus, been an egomaniac.

Commodus' accession was the beginning of a period of almost constant conflict between the emperors and the senate, and his murder in 192 led to a repetition of the crisis of 68. This time the successful general, Septimius Severus, was unable to reestablish good relations with the senate—many senators with provincial connections had backed his opponents and suffered accordingly. Further, he was of bourgeois family and his wife was a Syrian. He replied by packing the senate with appointees from the eastern provinces, hitherto usually excluded; by giving many positions, formerly reserved for senators, to bourgeois, especially easterners; by further welfare measures for the Roman mob; by extension of citizenship or colonial status to many provincial cities, and by showering favors on the frontier armies.

The old praetorians were cashiered, and a new and larger praetorian guard was formed from frontier troops. Under his son, Caracalla, the government became openly a military dictatorship. The army's loyalty to the family enabled a couple of juvenile second cousins to succeed Caracalla; then, in 235, an officer risen from the ranks wiped out the family and proceeded to govern with almost no regard for the senate or the traditional civilian order. The Augustan balance of powers was at an end.

From 27 B.C. to A.D. 235, however, the Augustan political structure had controlled England, Wales, and southern Scotland, all Europe south of the Rhine-Danube frontier, all Africa north of the Sahara, Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Turkey, Armenia, and districts in the Caucasus and south Russia. Save for the brief civil wars of 68-69 and 193-197, these had been years of peace; rebellions were rare. The provincial aristocracy's loyalty to the emperors made garrisons in the provinces unnecessary. One legion with auxiliaries (about 10,000 men) sufficed for Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. There were no Roman troops in the territory of modern France save for the personal guard of the governor at Lyons, 500 men. The army, though its strength gradually rose to about 300,000 as barbarian pressure on the northern frontier increased, was less than 1 per cent of the adult population.

This freed the national income for extension of cultivated land and improvement of the standard of living. The characteristic forms of Roman civilization appeared everywhere—roads (over 60,000 miles), bridges, aqueducts, and above all, cities. Before the great plague of 166 the inhabitants of the empire probably numbered between 75 million and 100 million. Increase of population produced increase of equipment—houses, tools, domesticated animals, orchards, vineyards, seed—which transformed the economic situation of occidental man. Knowledge also (the most important form of equipment) was increased and disseminated; the greatest wealth of the empire was its population of skilled farmers and artisans whose labor supported the whole structure. Selective breeding improved the quality of herds and crops. Vines resistant to cold and humidity were developed. After the French language, French wines are the most important Roman remains north of the Alps. In Africa, Palestine, Jordan, and Syria, Roman methods of irrigation supported cities in areas which even now are desert.

The characteristic form of this civilization was the small city of approximately 50,000 inhabitants, a mile or two in diameter. Only in the frontier provinces were the new cities walled. Life was secure even in the countryside, where the rich built magnificent villas on their estates. The money and labor which formerly went into city walls now went into paving, sewers, aqueducts, arcades along the main streets, and public buildings of which

the largest were usually those for the pleasure of the citizens: the circus, the amphitheater, at least one theater, invariably several baths. The Greeks had commonly bathed in cold water, from Augustus' time on, the Romans made the hot bath the center of a free man's afternoon, and architecturally developed public baths into vast complexes—a large cold bath, smaller warm baths, a hot room, dressing rooms, and often colonnades, gymnasiums, lecture rooms, and so on. In Rome the baths of Caracalla covered 45 acres. Even a village might have two or three public baths. Cleanliness, hitherto a luxury of the rich, became common.

After these buildings for public relaxation, the next largest were the temples of the gods and the buildings for public business; forums (open squares, usually arcaded), law courts, and markets. Administrative structures, the equivalents of "city hall" and "federal building," were absent—city administration was by locally elected, annual officers serving without salary, and imperial administration in the provinces was limited to the governors and their staffs, when the breakdown came in 235 there were only about 200 civilian officials with direct imperial appointments in the whole empire.

Of the city's industrial establishments, grain mills with four or five large grindstones, turned by donkeys, were often the largest. Shops were small affairs, most manufacture was by artisan-shopkeepers with a few slaves working under their direction, and most agricultural processing was done in the countryside. As for housing, a few of the bigger places had blocks of tenements, six or eight stories high, honeycombs of one-room residences without even kitchens—the inhabitants ate in taverns. Occasionally there were more luxurious "apartment houses." In most towns, however, private buildings were low, only one or two stories. The poor lived in blocks cut up into two- or three-room cubbyholes. The middle-class house would have a central courtyard giving light and air to the small rooms opening onto it. The rich multiplied courtyards and added cloisters and mosaic pavements and fountains and even private baths. In Africa houses were sometimes constructed underground as refuges from the heat; in the northern provinces there were houses with central heating. Even lower-class buildings, in many cities, had running water somewhere, piped in from the municipal aqueduct which also supplied public fountains. By the middle of the third century even the public buildings in a small Egyptian town had glass windows.

The city population was composed of landowners, shopkeepers, artisans, and servants. Food came from the surrounding countryside; supply and variety varied from season to season. Manufacturing was by handicrafts and mostly for local consumption. Trade was a minor factor in the total economy because transportation was slow and costly. (Italy lost its pottery

trade to the western provinces because it was cheaper to move the Italian potters than to ship the pots) Apparent exceptions—for instance, the shipment of Egyptian grain to Rome or the import of perfumes, jewels, and silk from the east—had little influence on the economy of the average city which remained one of local subsistence

So was its intellectual life. At the gymnasium the classics—Greek in the east, Latin in the west—were drilled into the boys. Adults encountered them chiefly on the stage, where traveling companies of actors kept them alive. There were all sorts of itinerant entertainers, from philosophers or rhetoricians (difficult to distinguish) down to sleight-of-hand artists and men with dancing bears. But the main entertainments were indicated by the main buildings, the baths, the circus for chariot races, the amphitheater for gladiatorial shows. (The use of torture for public amusement increased through the second century.) Usually there was no bookstore, but larger cities did have public libraries, and rich families had libraries in their villas.

The main religious concern of the city was the cult of the local gods. These had usually been identified with the Roman Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, or with Mars-Apollo and Venus-Aphrodite, the patrons of the Caesarian house. Their priests were usually elected annually. Rich men contested for these honors; there was no priestly class. The priesthoods of the imperial cult were similarly sought after. Augustus and later emperors had been deified after death by the senate; their cults were now everywhere established and the common expression of loyalty. They were the chief alien element in the religious life of the small city, which otherwise turned to its local gods for its daily needs.

The government of the city was principally local; usually it consisted of an assembly, elected magistrates, and a system of courts. These the empire was usually glad to recognize, since it was reluctant to multiply, and pay, officials, and therefore had no staff for local government. So it everywhere encouraged urbanization and left the cities to themselves, provided they paid their taxes and their debts and maintained order. This limited local independence fostered local patriotism. Wealthy men competed for civic offices, although these carried no salaries and often obligated the incumbent to provide, at his own expense, municipal services or entertainments. And everywhere cities were enriched with public buildings and lands as monuments of private munificence.

The great achievement of the Augustan political settlement was to provide the framework for two hundred and fifty years of this peaceful, provincial life of the small cities which made up the bulk of the enormous empire. It was a life of considerable comfort and elegance. An epigram of the time says that six hours of the day are for work, the rest, for life. A

single Greco-Roman artistic style became common, producing innumerable artifacts—metalwork, pottery, carving—which still command admiration. The great public monuments—bridges, aqueducts, theaters, temples—continued the tradition of the republic and survived to be the wonders of the medieval world.

These practical achievements were matched by a practical philosophy, directed, as in the Hellenistic world, to the achievement of "the good life." The upper class turned to Stoicism—desperately during the civil wars and reigns of terror, optimistically when good relations between the senate and the emperors were reestablished. Lower-class thought was permeated by the teaching of the Cynics, a school of vagrant preachers who made "philosophy" an excuse for the rejection of ordinary social decencies. Preaching, indeed, was characteristic of all this "philosophy"; even the greatest Stoics of this time, Seneca, Epictetus, the emperor Marcus Aurelius, were mainly concerned to drive home familiar principles. The same is true of Plutarch, the outstanding Platonist, and Philo, an eclectic who sought to justify Judaism. "Philosophy" retained its Hellenistic meaning "the practice of a peculiar discipline in daily life." Jews, Egyptian priests, and self-styled Indian sages all passed as "philosophers."

Homiletic Stoicism runs through all the literature of the period. The rhetoricians have little else to say. The most remarkable product of Stoicism in poetry was satire, in epigrams and versified diatribes, which enabled writers to combine morality with popular appeal; in attacking vice they could describe it with revolting and readable details. Martial and Juvenal used this technique to the full and are therefore famous. Petronius is more famous for his satirical picaresque novel, of verse and prose alternately, which has equally readable details, but none of the revolting morality; he was a favorite of Nero's, and Stoicism appears in his works only in parody. Much the same tradition was continued, with wide individual variations, by Apuleius and Lucian.

Stoic influence was stronger in the historians, of whom Tacitus was the greatest. A master of innuendo and understatement, Tacitus saw history as political intrigue and was determined to defend the senatorial party. The brilliance of his work, in spite of these limitations, makes the later Suetonius seem a scandalmonger and men like Appian, Arrian, and Dio Cassius, mere compilers. But their works are often more reliable, in total effect, than Tacitus' special pleading. As artistic achievements, however—polished presentations of his sardonic view of the world—Tacitus' histories are unrivaled save by Thucydides.

From this peak literary history plunges into a sea of collectors and commentators, industrious men with mediocre minds. Nor is the history of the fine arts more rewarding. The early years of the empire saw some

brilliant fresco painting and mosaics. Pompeii and Herculaneum preserve examples prior to 79. But this was decoration rather than fine art. Much sculpture was throttled by the dead hand of classicism, though Roman realism survived in vigorous portraits, and a new artistic form—the narrative frieze with a historical subject—became prominent. The great Roman architectural tradition lived on, and increased means made possible larger and larger buildings. All in all, however, the artistic output of the imperial age, like the literary and the philosophical, was mediocre. This holds, too, for scientific and technological thought. There was much collection of accepted results, and some application of known principles, but little was new.

In spite of this prevailing conservatism and the social stability it both reflected and produced, some major changes came about in the two centuries and more from the death of Augustus to the death of Severus Alexander. Some have already been mentioned: the increase of population and of wealth, especially in equipment, the spread of agriculture and of cities, the extension of membership in the senate to rich families from all parts of the empire,* the establishment everywhere of cults of the deified emperors, the spread of Stoicism and the permeation of all classes by its basic suppositions.

Connected with this last point was a far-reaching change in the privileges accorded persons of inferior social status. Stoicism had long preached the brotherhood of man, and contrasted natural rights with social privileges. By the Severan period, married women had attained an independence unparalleled in antiquity, and thenceforth the liberty and large legal rights of women would be characteristic of the Western world. Children and slaves, too, had been protected from arbitrary exercise of paternal authority. The position of slaves had improved for economic as well as legal and humanitarian reasons. The suppression of piracy sharply cut down the supply of new slaves; the end of civil wars and conquests reduced it yet further; the common practice of manumission diminished the supply of existing slaves. It became more economical to work estates with free tenant farmers. One consequence of this, however, was a decline in legal respect for the free man as such. The law now began to distinguish between freemen of upper and lower class—*honestiores* and *humiliores*. The former were exempt from humiliating procedures and punishments to which the latter were subject.

At least equally important was the change in religion during the first two centuries. Cults of Near Eastern deities spread widely in the west: Isis

* At the end of the first century 80 per cent of the senators were Italian, at the end of the second, only 40 per cent.

of Egypt and her son, Harpocrates; Yahweh of Jerusalem and Jesus, his son; Mithras, the Persian, Cybele of Phrygia. "the great Mother of the Gods," and her consort, Attis. All these deities had, attached to their regular cults, special ceremonies which promised the participants blessing in this life and well-being in the life to come. Life after death now occupied much of the common worshiper's concern. These special ceremonies were commonly secret initiations called "mysteries"; they admitted one not only to future bliss, but also to the circle of fellow initiates who could be helpful connections. In a humdrum world the appeal of secret societies and occult knowledge was understandable. There had always been a large element of superstition in Roman culture, and it increased in late Antonine and Severan times. The spread of the Oriental cults, and of magic and astrology, was a symptom of this general increase. Among these cults two, Judaism and Christianity, became the major religions of the Western world.

The Judaism of the Greco-Roman world is a riddle. In the first place, where did the Jews come from? The Greek (and thence the Roman) term "Jew" looks like a geographical term and should mean "Judean," i.e., resident of, or emigrant from, the tiny district around Jerusalem. But this poor hill country could never have supported a large population. Yet in 1 B.C. there were large "Jewish" populations not only in Palestine and Transjordan, but also in Egypt, Cyrenaica, Cyprus, western Asia Minor, Syria, the Greek islands, Rome, south Italy, Tunisia, Arabia, Mesopotamia, Persia, and Armenia, perhaps a total of 3 million. That all these were descendants of the perhaps 50,000 inhabitants of Judea in 600 B.C. is unlikely.

Many certainly were converts or descendants of converts, probably more had been first called "Jews" by their neighbors because they worshiped the god whom the Jews worshiped. The syncretistic Judean worshipers of Yahweh—the majority during the monarchy—doubtless carried his cult with them into exile and taught it to their neighbors. This would explain the syncretistic worship of Yahweh in fifth-century Egypt and Mesopotamia, and the prominence of Yahweh in the polytheistic magical papyri. With the rise of a Judean state in the second and first centuries B.C. many of these worshipers of Yahweh, including the descendants of the north Israelite exiles, probably came to be called by the name of the most prominent community of their god's adherents, and adopted Judean ways.

This rise of a Judean state began when quarrels between rival candidates for the Jerusalem priesthood and attempts to Hellenize the cult led, in 168 B.C., to revolts against the city government and the Seleucid kingdom. A military leader, Judas "Maccabeus," turned the revolts into a guerrilla war. His brothers and their children, who eventually won the war,

took over the high priesthood of Jerusalem (in violation of the Pentateuchal law), conquered most of Palestine and parts of Transjordan in the late second and early first century, and forcibly converted large bodies of the population to their brand of Judaism. But they quarreled among themselves, and were ousted in 37 by a Jewish politician named Herod who had been recognized as king by the Roman senate. Herod, like the Maccabees, made himself the patron of "Jews" all over the empire. He lavishly rebuilt Jerusalem, especially the temple, which he made one of the most famous buildings of the Greco-Roman world. In his reign ancient Judaism reached the apogee of its power and prestige.

But what was it? A great variety of beliefs and practices which can best be called "the cult of Yahweh," since they were all regarded as obedience or worship of "the Lord," the god not to be named, whose greatest temple was that in Jerusalem. The official authority as to the religion there was the high priest of the Jerusalem temple, an appointee of Herod, for whom many Jews had little respect. There was a rival temple-in-exile in Egypt, staffed by descendants of the legitimate high-priestly line, but they, too, seem to have had little influence with the majority of the Jews. There were in Palestine three unofficial schools of legal interpretation—and consequently of religious practice—organized as sects: the Pharisees, in one dubious passage said to number 6,000, the Essenes, said on better authority to number 4,000, and the Sadducees, an even smaller group. These sects were sharply opposed to one another. The mass of the people belonged to none but followed their own traditional practices. They were also ready to listen to holy men whose teachings were often peculiar.

One of these holy men, named John, came to be called the Baptist because he introduced a new rite of immersion ("baptism") which, he claimed, would take away sin as well as impurity. Great crowds went out to him for baptism, and he preached to them against the vices of the rulers and prophesied the imminent end of the world. His preaching was so successful that one of the rulers, a son of Herod, had him executed about A.D. 30. His disciples persisted as a sect for some time after his death; some of them are said to have believed he was the Messiah—the "anointed" king whom "the Lord" was expected to send to save his people.

Another holy man was Jesus, who began his career by going to John for baptism. When baptized, he had a vision in which he saw a holy spirit coming down on him and heard a voice from heaven, presumably the Lord's, declaring him "my son." The spirit then drove him into the desert, whence he returned to Galilee, began "to cast out demons" (that is, to quiet maniacs), and was believed to perform other miracles. He also preached on moral questions, and was criticized by the Pharisees for neglect of their religious law. From the large following thus attracted, he

chose twelve assistants. To them he revealed that he was the Messiah and that the end of the world would come in their lifetime. With them he went up to Jerusalem for the Passover, and there, in a private meal, he gave them bread and wine which he said were his body and blood. Later that night he was seized by the temple authorities. The next day they handed him over to the Romans as a would-be revolutionary, and the Romans had him crucified.

On the third day thereafter his disciples began to see him risen from the dead. Later they had a vision of his ascent to heaven, themselves received the holy spirit, and began to preach a baptism "in his name" which not only took away the sins of the penitent, but also conferred the holy spirit and assured salvation in the judgment to come at the end of the world. This preaching led to their persecution by the temple authorities, who did not wish to be blamed for Jesus' death, and also by the Pharisees, probably because the members of the new sect were no more observant of the Law than their teacher had been. Many therefore fled the city. Thus the new cult was carried to the neighboring territories and eventually to Antioch, where the adherents first called themselves "Christians," that is, adherents of the new "Christ" (Messiah). Meanwhile a Pharisee named in Hebrew Saul (in Greek, Paul), who had played a prominent part in the Jerusalem persecution, was converted by a vision of Jesus and, after adventures in Palestine and Syria, began a series of missionary journeys through Cyprus, Asia Minor, and Greece, leaving groups of converts in most of the cities he visited. He also occasionally returned to Jerusalem. There in the middle fifties he was involved in a riot in the temple, seized by the Roman authorities, sent to the procurator in Caesarea and eventually to Rome for trial, and—here the story, as told in the Acts of the Apostles, breaks off. Later tradition says that he was executed in Rome, probably in the early sixties.

For this account of the work of Jesus, his immediate disciples, and Paul, the sources are the four Gospels, written in the last quarter of the first century; the Acts of the Apostles, originally a sequel to the Gospel According to Luke; and the letters of Paul, dating mainly from the fifties. These sources disagree with one another, and sometimes with themselves, in many points—for instance, their stories of the resurrection. Further, they all represent Christian tradition as it was after one or two generations of reflection, controversy, exaggeration, and invention. Finally, they are full of incredible stories of which some—those of the resurrection will again serve as instances—may be of historical value as reflections of subjective experiences. Consequently, no more than the main outlines of the history can be ascertained with certainty. Of the events described above, Jesus' choice of the twelve and their role, his arguments with the Pharisees, and his teaching about himself are matters of particular dispute. The history

given by Acts is full of riddles, and we know nothing of the history in areas Acts neglected, for instance, Alexandria and Rome

Hence the early history of Christianity cannot be followed in detail. We can see that there were in the beginning many conflicting interpretations of Jesus' teaching and career, and that gradually a consensus—a rudimentary church—began to be built up. An important part of this development was eventual agreement as to a list of books accepted as authoritative—the present Old and New Testaments. Even more important was the development of a standard organization for individual churches: an overseer ("bishop") supported in questions of policy by a board of elders ("presbyters," eventually "priests"), and in matters of administration by several assistants ("deacons"). The bishop was the authority on the legal as well as the devotional tradition of the church. He held a court to which believers were expected to bring their claims against each other. But the most important element in the growth of his power was his control of the church's charitable funds and organizations and of its cemetery. Christianity spread largely as a mutual protective association of people of small means.

Another factor in the development of Christianity was its separation from Judaism. Paul's practice in coming to a new city was to preach first in the synagogue. Usually he won over some of the Jews and more of the pagans who revered the Lord but were not prepared to observe the more painful requirements of Pentateuchal law—circumcision, for instance. Presumably other missionaries did likewise. The resultant disputes between converts to the new sect and the majority of the synagogue members led to the common antithesis between "the Christians" and "the Jews." The Christians claimed—and still claim—to be "the true Israel," but in practice they came to be mostly of pagan background and soon ceased to think of themselves as Jews or to be recognized as such by other Jews. Thus by gradual fission Christianity changed from a Jewish sect to a "new" religion.

Since this religion worshiped a man who had been crucified by the Romans for attempted rebellion and since the quarrels between its adherents and the Jews were frequent occasions of civil disorder, its members were often in trouble with civil authorities. When a great fire destroyed much of Rome in 64, Nero's officials put the blame on them. Since the scrupulous members would not participate in the worship of gods other than Jesus and the Lord, popular opinion stigmatized them, along with Jews and philosophers, as "atheists," and popular imagination (aided by the practices of some libertines and the ritual words of the communion meal) turned their secret meetings into orgies of copulation and cannibalism. Consequently, local persecutions became more frequent. Nevertheless,

by the end of the Severan period there were Christians in every part of the empire and in every class of society. Though there was no empire-wide organization, most bishops were in approximate agreement on questions of doctrine and discipline, and this agreement had produced a sort of orthodoxy, "the catholic"—the universal—"church"

During this same period the other forms of Judaism changed no less than Christianity. Jewish resentment of Roman rule in Palestine led to a major revolt in 66. This led in 70 to the capture of Jerusalem by Titus and the destruction of the temple, which put an end to the official sacrificial religion (Titus was the most efficient reformer of ancient Judaism). At the same time the temple in Egypt was closed to prevent disturbances. In this revolt the Sadducees, mostly wealthy, pro-Roman, and concentrated in Jerusalem, were killed off by the rebels. The Essenes and other parties who supported the revolt were liquidated by the Romans. But a leading Pharisee, Yohanan ben Zakkai, managed to escape from Jerusalem, make his peace with the Romans, and get their permission to establish a court at Jabneh. With Roman approval his court became the chief authority in Palestine for the settlement of questions of religious law, numerous and important because of the destruction of the temple. It laid down the main lines for the reorganization of Judaism around the already existent synagogue worship, with almsgiving, penitence, and prayer replacing sacrifice. It also settled the question as to which books should be considered sacred. (The list decided on, different from the Christian list, was taken over in the Reformation by the Protestants.) From ben Zakkai, leadership passed to a descendant of the great teacher Hillel of Herodian times, whose family had traditionally headed one wing of the Pharisaic party. Next the diasporic Judaism of Cyrenaica, Egypt, and Cyprus rose in revolt against the Romans in 115–117. The cause and course of the revolt are obscure, but its end was the annihilation of Judaism in these provinces. Finally, the control of Palestinian Judaism temporarily passed from the house of Hillel to anti-Roman rabbis of whom the greatest, Akiba, backed a Messianic pretender named bar Kosiba* in a revolt from 131–135 which ended with the wiping out of Judaism in southern Palestine.

For a short period the Roman government seems to have considered stamping out Judaism altogether—circumcision and teaching of the Law were prohibited. But this did not last. Presently the Hillelite court was re-established—now in Galilee and supported by Roman soldiers. A Roman commission investigated the Jewish law and suggested changes to diminish conflicts between Jews and gentiles. This was followed by codification of the law and publication of the code under Rabbi Judah the Prince in the late second and early third centuries. His code, the Mishnah, became the

* Commonly called "bar Kokeba." The correct form of his name has only recently been determined.

basis of study in both Palestine and Mesopotamia, the commentaries on it being eventually collected in the Palestinian and Babylonian Talmuds. The Mishnaic type of Judaism spread gradually through the Greco-Roman diaspora, becoming dominant, it seems, only in the fifth and sixth centuries, but thereafter remaining the characteristic form of the religion.

For Further Reading

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20 The Later Roman Empire

The fifty years from the murder of Severus Alexander in 235 to Diocletian's defeat of Carinus in 285 were a period of anarchy. Diocletian, during his twenty-year reign, reestablished order and reorganized the empire, but his retirement in 305 was followed by another outbreak of civil war, and it remained for Constantine, after reuniting the empire in 324, to continue and extend the earlier changes. He developed a polity strong enough to prevent serious revolts, defend the frontiers, and secure regular succession to the throne.

The primary factor in the anarchy had been military insubordination. Again and again, all around the empire, frontier troops mutinied and set up their commanders as emperors. The consequent internal chaos left the frontiers open to the barbarians. All the countries along the Rhine-Danube frontier were ravaged. From the Black Sea, Gothic pirates sailing through the Hellespont plundered the Aegean cities. In the east the new Sassanid Persian empire undertook the reconquest of northern Mesopotamia and the annexation of Armenia. Even Egypt and Africa were raided by savage

- A D.
- 235 Murder of Severus Alexander, beginning of 50 years' chaos
 - 249 Decius' persecution of the Christians
 - 251 Decius defeated and killed by the Goths; persecution dropped
 - 257 Valerian's persecution of the Christians
 - 259 Valerian defeated and captured by the Persians, persecution dropped
 - 268–269 Goths defeated in the Balkans
 - 271 Aurelian fortifies Rome, evacuates Dacia
 - 271–273 Aurelian resubjugates the eastern provinces
 - 274 Aurelian recovers Gaul and reforms the currency
 - 285 Defeat of Carinus, Diocletian in control
 - 303 Diocletian's persecution of the Christians
 - 305 Diocletian retires, Antony organizes Christian hermits in Egypt
 - 306 Constantine proclaimed emperor at York
 - 312 Constantine's conquest of Italy
 - 320 Pachomius' first monastery
 - 324 Constantine defeats Licinius and reunites the empire
 - 325 The Council of Nicaea makes a theological theory an article of the faith, enforced by the imperial government
 - 330 Constantinople becomes the imperial residence
 - 331 Constantine expropriates the properties of the pagan temples
 - 346 Death of Pachomius; monasticism established in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, and Asia Minor
 - 361–363 Julian the Apostate restores the privileges of paganism
 - 363 Julian defeated and killed by the Persians; peace with Persia

tribes who had grown numerous along the fringes of Roman cultivation. These raids destroyed much property and many lives; not only was the open countryside laid waste, but numerous cities were captured. Moreover, the raids occasioned further insubordination in the army. Most divisions had strong local ties and were concerned to defend their own districts, and many refused to be transferred to areas where they were more needed.

A.D.	391	Theodosius I prohibits pagan worship
	406–407	Gaul overrun by Alans, Sueves, and Vandals
	410	Rome sacked by the Visigoths; Britain abandoned
	435–453	Attila, king of the Huns, raids the Danube provinces
	439	Carthage taken by the Vandals
	454	Ostrogoths settle in Pannonia
	459–487	Ostrogoths loot the Balkans; Isaurians in Asia Minor and Syria imperial succession in the West comes to an end
	493	The Bulgar invasions of Thrace begin
	533	Beginning of Justinian's attempt to reconquer the west
	540	War with Persia
	568	Lombard invasion of Italy; Avars dominant along the Danube
	572	Visigoths reconquer Spain
	602	The emperor Maurice overthrown by the army; Phocas installed
	610	Phocas overthrown by Heraclius
	610–626	The Avars at the gates of Constantinople; the Persians overrun Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt; the empire reorganized as a set of military administrative districts
	626	The Avars destroyed outside Constantinople; Serbs and Croats settle in the Balkans
	627	Battle of Nineveh, the Persians decisively defeated and forced to withdraw from the empire
	636	Battle of the Yarmuk; Syria lost to the Arabs
	641	Death of Heraclius; loss of Egypt to the Arabs

They set up their commanders as local rulers and organized their own local defense. Finally, the movements of Roman armies to repel the raiders or fight civil wars were almost as hard on the countryside as the raids themselves.

All these military operations had to be financed, and money had to be raised to buy off barbarians who could not be driven off. As the ruin of the countryside and the breakup of trade cut down income from taxes, the money had to be coined. There was plenty of copper for it, but silver was lacking, so the silver content of nominally silver coins was cut to a

minimum, then, at the worst period, replaced by a thin silver plating. Prices soared. Eventually even the government could not live on its own money—the principal taxes had to be paid in kind.

Recovery began as the breakdown had begun, with the army. First the Goths were crushed in the Balkans in 268–269, then the emperor Aurelian in 271 pulled Roman forces and settlers back from Dacia (western Rumania) to the Danube. This greatly shortened the frontier and made it more defensible. The settlers strengthened the provinces south of the river, which had been depopulated by Gothic raids, while the evacuated territory gave the remaining Goths room to settle and reduced their pressure on the frontier. Aurelian could then withdraw troops from the Balkans to resubjugate the east and Egypt in 271–273 and Gaul in 274. This enabled the empire to survive another attack of military insubordination which ended with the triumph of Diocletian.

In territory the new empire was almost identical with the old; only southern Scotland, the Rhine-Danube salient, and Dacia had been lost. Its primary concern, however, was one which had hitherto been minor: security from attack. All cities were now fortified. Rome itself began to build new walls in 271. Moreover, walls and ditches, or strings of towers, and supporting military roads, were constructed around the entire frontier, even across the deserts of north Africa.

Concern for defense implies the primacy of the army. Under Diocletian its strength was raised to about 400,000. To make it efficient yet keep the units loyal was the fundamental problem for Diocletian and Constantine.

The background of many third-century revolts, especially in the western provinces, had been the local loyalties of the frontier troops, hitherto stationed for their whole tour of duty, usually twenty years, in their native province. Consequently the army was now divided into first- and second-class troops, and only the latter were left in their own provinces, mostly as border guards. Further, to check ambitious generals, the civil government was almost everywhere separated from the military, and the provinces—all of them now governed by imperial appointees—were so fragmented that few could offer any considerable basis for revolt. At the same time the army units were fragmented, and command of the units was given mostly to men who had risen from the ranks and had no experience of civil government or ties with the civilian population. Finally, the first-class troops were commonly concentrated in cities somewhat back from the frontier, as mobile forces capable of striking an invasion at any point. For this purpose they were given special training and strengthened by enlarged cavalry units. Since all units, foot and cavalry alike, were of relatively small size, and the force in any city was made up of many units of different backgrounds, the chance of revolt by first-class troops was small, and these first-class troops kept the provincial forces along the frontiers in awe.

The chance of revolt by first-class troops was further diminished by the fact that many of them were foreigners. Because of the government's insistence that all cultivable land be taxed, many landowners obligated to provide recruits preferred to give money rather than a man. With the money the government hired barbarians individually, to serve in the regular army. Since these barbarians were picked for their fighting ability while the men sent by landowners were generally the worst who could pass muster, the levies from the provinces went largely into the second-class frontier guards and the first-class troops got a large proportion of barbarians who, as isolated aliens, were not likely to revolt. The employ of whole tribes of barbarians as units under their own leaders was a different matter. This led to serious revolts by these tribes, but not by the regular army.

Both the loyalty and the efficiency of the army were directly dependent on its proper upkeep. This proved the most difficult problem Diocletian and Constantine had to face. Although agricultural production had improved since Augustan times—the use of wind and water mills was extended, and the silo, the cold cellar, and hay were discovered—yet deforestation, erosion, and exhaustion of the soil and of mines and quarries had impoverished the empire. Yet worse was the widespread destruction of property, especially farm buildings and livestock, orchards and vineyards. The rural population had no financial reserves, so a raid which carried off livestock or destroyed vineyards put the affected area out of production for a long time. Consequently the financial burden, which for the Antonine empire had been considerable, was worse for the Constantinian empire.

Most of this burden had to be borne by the peasantry, for the great majority of the empire's production was agricultural. But the peasants had already been paying almost all they could. A little more could be squeezed out of them, and traders and artisans and even senators could be made to pay something—and were. But this did not suffice. People gave up keeping accounts for fear of taxation. Therefore the government cut salaries by debasing the currency and then supplementing money salaries with payments in kind which sufficed only for subsistence. Moreover, it squeezed the well-to-do families of the small cities until many of them were reduced to poverty.

The earlier empire had made the city councils responsible for collection of taxes from the city territories. Similarly, it had held them responsible for the maintenance of roads, bridges, and post stations in their territories, and had also imposed on them occasional levies in kind to meet extraordinary needs. With anarchy and inflation the taxes had mostly become nominal, but levies in kind had become routine. Diocletian, unable to stabilize the currency, resorted to an annual tax in kind assessed on land. The city councilmen were made personally responsible for the total assessed on their city's territories. From them the produce went to the provincial

governors for transport to officials specified by the paymaster general. By these officials it was paid out as rations to all government employees, military and civil alike

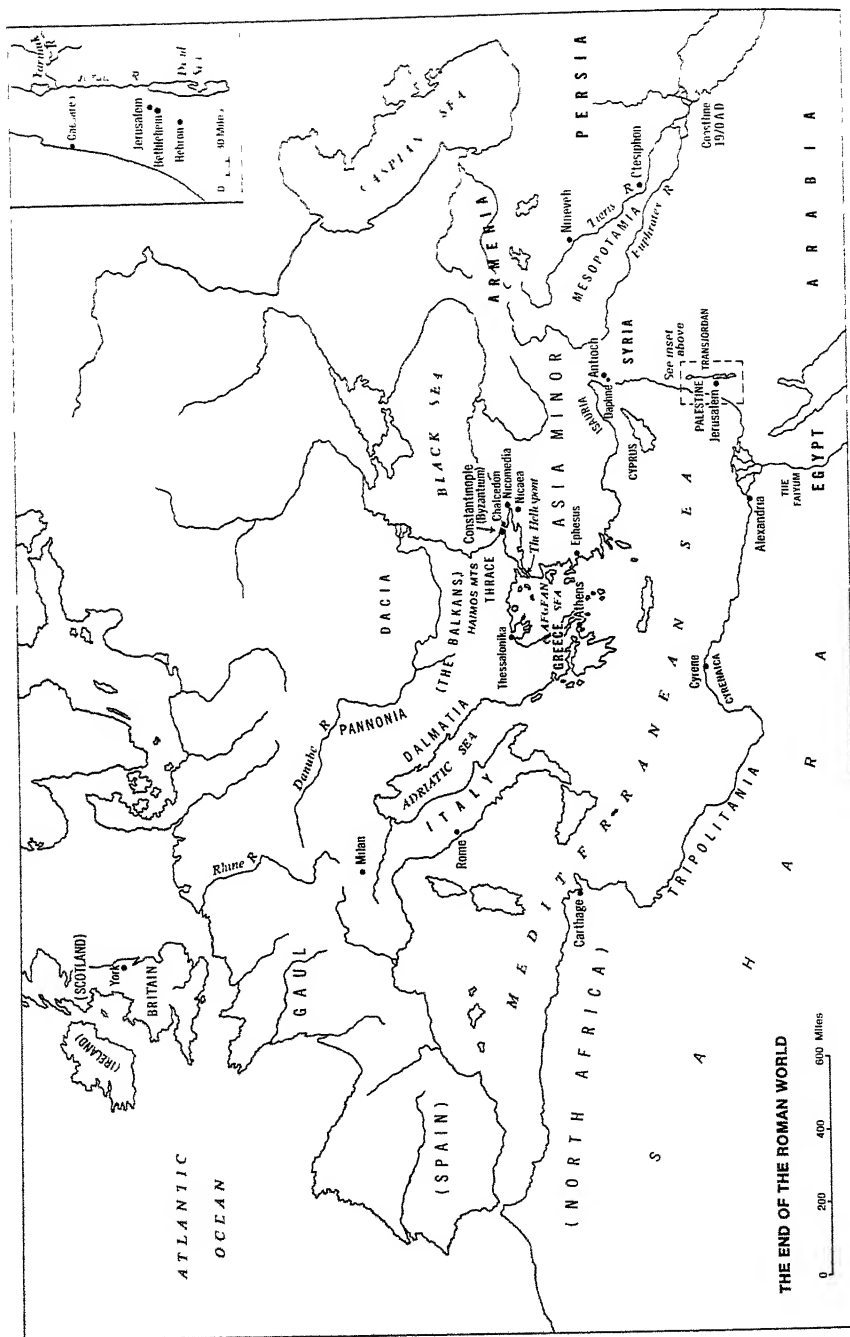
This tax remained the chief source of imperial income down to the fifth century. It entailed considerable social changes. Land had to continue to be cultivated in order to yield its assigned quota. Therefore the farm laborers had to stay on it to cultivate it. Similarly the municipal councilmen had to remain in office to collect or make up for their quotas, and the officials of the provincial governor to transport the produce, and so on. Consequently a series of laws fixed these and more classes of the population, and their descendants, in their places and professions. Moreover, this system required a large secretarial staff to draw up the census, estimate the needs, make the allotments, certify the collection, check the transfers, investigate delinquencies, try the offenders, and so on. This was doubtless a major reason for the fragmentation of the provinces. Provincial governors had now so much supervision and adjudication on their hands that one was needed (with his staff, of course) for every small district. Besides the trebling of the provincial administrations, the bureaucracy of the central government proliferated fantastic titles, and with every title went not only a state salary but the opportunity—which soon becomes a legally recognized right—of demanding fees from the public for performance of the prescribed service. Thus the taxpayer had to support both the army and the bureaucracy. The bureaucracy came to number thirty or forty thousand. This was only a tenth the size of the army, but bureaucrats were more expensive than soldiers. Besides their salaries and their fees were their bribes. And worst of all, the empire could not afford enough of them to do the paper work the system required—especially since every copy of every document had to be written individually. Without efficient filing systems the accumulation of documents became unmanageable and there were innumerable opportunities for evasion of the laws. Finally, with the proliferation of the bureaucrats, edicts proliferated defining their functions, revising the definitions, creating exceptions and then exceptions to the exceptions. Since the regular recourse from bureaucratic injustice was through the law, the multiplication of lawsuits and lawyers and courts immediately complemented the multiplication of the bureaucracy and still further increased the size and importance of the nonproductive population.

These luxuries ruined many city councilmen who had to make up the deficits of their districts. In the countryside the financial pressure fell hardest on the small landowners. The rich were able, through bribery and influence, to have the assessments on their holdings minimized and to avoid paying even the minimum. Therefore this period, especially in the West, saw a growth of great estates. The rich had already used the opportunities

of the civil wars and invasions to buy up or appropriate the ruined or deserted farms of their neighbors. Now increased taxation led many of the peasants to make over their properties to the rich landlord of the neighborhood in exchange for protection from the city council's tax collectors and a guarantee of the right to live on and work the land. Thus the peasants were gradually transformed to serfs. Eventually law ratified the change; the great proprietors were given criminal jurisdiction over the territories of their estates. At the same time the law further developed its long-standing distinction between the upper and lower classes. Normally upper-class individuals might not be tortured to secure evidence, or subjected to humiliating punishments, or compelled to labor on public works, or required to provide animals, housing, or other services for public officials. None of these exemptions held for the lower classes.

Most prominent among the rich landowners who profited from these developments were the senators. Hostility between the senate and the army had been one of the main causes of the fall of the Severan dynasty in 235. Through the following period of anarchy and invasions the army necessarily gained in power and senators were eventually excluded from military commands. But no military leader had the time or the forces to suppress the senate thoroughly; it would have required a major civil war. When Diocletian and Constantine fixed their capitals in the east, the senate, remaining in Rome, was reduced to a city council. But the city was Rome; its prestige was still of great importance. Moreover, the senate was made up of the empire's richest landowners, protected by legal privileges and family connections. It escaped annihilation through subservience and serious taxation through bribery and influence. So senatorial wealth increased. Senators' villas now became villages, centers both of subsistence economy and of local government and defense, important links in the transmission of classical farming techniques to the Middle Ages.

On the other hand, in the imperial government the senate became merely an audience to which decisions might be announced for acclamation. All laws and important appointments were made by the emperor. All decisions on policy were made in the imperial council (or bedchamber). The imperial council was composed of the most important military commanders (below whom were the regional commanders, *duces* and *comites*, whence came the dukes and counts of the Middle Ages), the commander of the imperial guards, the head of the provincial administration (who was also chief justice and paymaster general), the head of the imperial estates (the emperor owned almost a fifth of the arable land), the treasurer (who controlled coinage, receipts, and expenses in precious metals, and imperial monopolies, such as mines and arsenals), the secretary for legal affairs, and the head of the records office (who was also in charge of appoint-



ments, couriers, and intelligence). Not a member of the council, because he was a eunuch, the grand chamberlain of the imperial palace had great influence because of his access to and knowledge of the emperor, not to mention the empress.

The government thus reverted to the Oriental pattern—a despotism resting on control of an army and acting through a royal council composed of executives arbitrarily appointed by the king. The Greek experiment was abandoned. Even in law, trial by jury died out. All that survived was a literary tradition from which subsequent ages would draw inspiration.

The nature of the new government was reflected in the new titles, trappings, and rituals of the court. These, like the government, had their beginnings in earlier periods, but only now were developed consistently. Everything that had to do with the emperor became “sacred”; he no longer wore the old Roman toga, but a purple triumphal robe, embroidered with gold and jewels, and a diadem, symbol of Hellenistic kingship, studded with pearls or with the rays of the sun-god; he was surrounded always by a military escort; his ministers and officials customarily wore military uniform; he was hailed as “King” and “Autocrat.” As the court was predominantly military, and the army predominantly from the Latin provinces, so the language of the upper administration, even in the East, now became Latin, and remained so for more than a century.

The new monarch needed a new capital. Rome called up too many memories, and worse, the senate was there. Moreover, the concern for defense demanded a capital nearer the dangerous frontiers. And since the court and central administration fed on taxes paid in kind, and transport was expensive by sea but even more expensive by land, the court was best located at a seaport in the richest part of the empire—the east. Constantine’s choice was Byzantium, which he renamed Constantinople. The situation was superb economically—controlling the crossroads between Europe and Asia, the Black Sea and the Aegean—and also strategically—a spacious, well-watered, easily fortified peninsula within striking distance of the lower Danube, where barbarian pressure was greatest, and with good communications to Antioch, the base for defense against the Persians.

One advantage of the new capital, in Constantine’s eyes, was its lack of the religious establishment of ancient Rome. Fifty years of anarchy had made many converts to Christianity. Some turned to its promises for future life, or of immediate grace for refuge from the present world. More found companionship and financial security in its communities and their charities, on which the disasters of the civil society made many dependent. The resultant combination of the growth of Christianity and the ruin of the state made the imperial policy toward the new religion an acute question. Both Christians and pagans believed that the gods would punish men who did not worship them properly.

While Christianity had been uncommon and the empire prosperous, the Christians' refusal to worship the pagans' gods had been generally ignored. But now Christians were everywhere, and the disasters of the empire proved that the gods were angry, presumably at the Christians' "atheism."

In 249 the emperor Decius decided to stamp out Christianity. But next year he was killed trying to stop an invasion of the Goths. This ended the persecution and probably persuaded many that the Christians were right—"the deaths of the persecutors" became a favorite theme of their propaganda. The next two reigns were equally brief and disastrous. Then Valerian renewed the persecution in 257 and was captured, with much of his army, by the Persians in 259. His son Gallienus called off the persecution and officially permitted the practice of Christianity.

So matters stood until the end of Diocletian's reign, when in 303 Gallienus' edict was rescinded and persecution renewed. By this time Christians were so numerous that the decision to persecute involved a great economic sacrifice and administrative effort. This probably influenced Constantine, when he seized power in the west in 306, to let persecution there lapse. His mother Helena's devotion to Christianity, his own belief that he was under the protection of the Christians' god, and the strength of Christianity in Italy and the east, which he hoped to conquer, also shaped his decision. After his conquest of Italy in 312 he arranged with his eastern co-emperor for toleration of all religions, but immediately began in his own domains to patronize Christianity. After eliminating his co-emperor in 324 he seized the treasures and estates of most pagan temples—the treasures he particularly needed to restore the supply of gold and silver currency—but he gave vast sums to the Christians, especially for building. Bishops all over the east were authorized to draw on imperial funds for repairs of damages from the persecutions. Magnificent churches were built at Rome and in many cities of Italy, as well as Nicomedia, Antioch, Jerusalem, Bethlehem, and Hebron, while Constantinople received a whole choir. All these churches were lavishly endowed. Others throughout the empire received from the state annual subsidies of food for distribution to the poor. The Christian clergy were exempted from service as city councilmen, a privilege which led to an epidemic of vocations among the well-to-do of the cities and cut down sharply the resources on which the cities could draw to meet their expenses; finally Constantine had to prohibit ordination of councilmen. The bishops' powers were increased by the increase of the funds they controlled. Civil and criminal law was also revised in the Christian interest and more or less according to Christian standards. Sunday was made a holiday as "the day of the sun," so pagans as well as Christians would observe it. Celibates were permitted to inherit property. Divorce was made more difficult, concubinage and pederasty outlawed, illegitimacy

penalized Gladiatorial games were prohibited—though they continued in the west until the beginning of the fifth century. Beside the expropriation of the lands and treasures of pagan temples, animal sacrifice was prohibited, but this prohibition, too, remained a dead letter. A few temples were destroyed. Obstacles were put in the way of conversion to Judaism. Finally Christians were favored in appointments, benefactions, petitions and appeals. The upper administration became largely Christian.

Christianity was not merely the cult of a new god (or gods—the Christians were not quite clear on this point). It was an *organized* cult, as none of the pagan cults had been. It was also an *intolerant* cult, not only intolerant of those who worshiped other gods without the state's permission (this paganism had often been), but intolerant, by inheritance from Deuteronomy, of anyone who worshiped any other god at all, and thence, by theological extension, of anyone who practiced Christianity "incorrectly." These two characteristics were complementary; the intolerance had done much to build up the organization; the organization made the intolerance effective.

In Constantine's time the organization was still loose. The bishops of large districts met as occasion required under the presidency of the bishop of the chief city of the district. There was no empire-wide church government. The bishop of Rome claimed a vague preeminence, but even in the west important bishops sometimes contradicted him. However, the members of the church thought of it as a unity, corresponded with one another, were concerned about the treatment of their fellow members in other parts of the empire, and were in approximate agreement on teaching and discipline. A man expelled from the organization in Alexandria or Antioch would usually find its doors closed to him in Rome or Carthage, and vice versa. Moreover, this organization had a tradition of independence from the civil government, indeed, of hostility to it.

Now, for the first time, there were two great powers within the empire—the state and the church. No longer were priests merely civil officials in charge of religious affairs, as they had been hitherto in Greco-Roman tradition. They now belonged to an organization essentially different from the civil government, one claiming a different (and higher) authorization. The bishops were happy to accept Constantine's patronage and willing, in return, to follow his directives. They would also use their influence in the service of the state—with the fourth century begins their condemnation of Christians who refuse to perform military service. But they did not become members of the imperial council, nor did they normally invite imperial officers to participate in their councils. From now on, these two organizations, civil and ecclesiastical, were to live side by side, through alternating conflicts and alliances.

The alliance initiated by Constantine immediately involved him in difficulties. The Church was anxious to use him to implement its intolerance. The consequent treatment of pagans and Jews has already been mentioned. "Heretics," that is, minor Christian parties, were more energetically persecuted. And competing groups within the main organization now battled for government patronage, the victors using the power of the state to suppress their opponents. This policy backfired in Africa, where the growth of great Roman estates had produced a large class of landless agricultural migrants who hated the Roman government and became violent supporters of the party the government decided to oppose (the "Donatists"). Constantine eventually gave up the struggle; persecution was a luxury he could ill afford.

In the east a dispute broke out between Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, and one of his presbyters named Arius, over the relation between the "Word" or "Son" of "God" which had been incarnate in Jesus, and "God" himself, now called "the Father"—his name, Yahweh, having been generally forgotten. Practically all Christians now worshiped "Jesus, the Son of God" as a god, and would not consider giving up this practice. Were there then two gods? Or were the Son and the Father somehow one? Arius took the first position, making the Son an inferior god created by the Father. Alexander excommunicated him, but many neighboring bishops supported him. Constantine's ecclesiastical advisers at first backed Alexander, and Constantine summoned all the bishops of the church to a council in 325 at Nicaea. Some three hundred showed up and adopted a creed to which all "orthodox" Christians were thenceforth required by the state to assent; it asserted belief in God the Father, and in Jesus Christ the Son of God "of the same substance as the Father." All bishops were willing to sign this, except two who were deposed and banished, as was Arius. Later on, however, Constantine came under the influence of pro-Arian advisers and called other councils which readmitted Arius to communion and condemned his leading opponent, Athanasius, who had succeeded Alexander as bishop of Alexandria.

The situation in Egypt began to look like that in Africa. In Egypt, though, the opposition to the government was centered in a new class of social institutions, the monasteries. Withdrawal from society had taken a variety of physical and psychological forms in the ancient world. Most conspicuous had been that of the Cynics. But in the late third century Cynicism withered away. As anarchy and consequent poverty spread, there was less to spare for wandering preachers; a man who rejected society now had to find some place where he could support himself, otherwise society would reject him, too. Hence the Christian hermit. Diocletian's policies augmented the movement, not only by persecuting the Christians in the

cities, but also by increasing and regularizing the tax on cultivated land. Land which would not yield enough to pay both the tax and the cost of cultivation was now, if possible, disowned, since if ownership were admitted the government would tax it anyhow. Much of this disowned land was good enough for subsistence farming. On it the hermits settled.

By the time of Diocletian's retirement (305) hermits were so thick near the Faiyûm that one of them, the legendary Antony, formed a loose organization of solitaries, mainly for mutual protection and common worship. About 320 in upper Egypt an ex-soldier named Pachomius founded a monastery—a community with a definite head, common residence, common discipline, common daily worship, and division of labor, under the direction of the superior, to meet the needs of the community. By the time of his death in 346 he had established nine monasteries for men and one for women, with some three thousand inmates. By this time, too, there were many ascetics and possibly some beginnings of organization (whether native or imported from Egypt is uncertain) in Palestine, Syria, and Asia Minor.

The first monks were mostly social misfits, and many were of peasant stock. They usually hated cities and tax collectors, and had no appreciation for the higher aspects of classical culture: they perpetuated, along with other elements of Cynicism, its contempt for learning and its identification of asceticism with virtue. The few more educated were often men from city families who had been ruined by taxation and had no love for the government. The first monasteries accordingly paid no taxes. Located in desert areas, they governed themselves. Politically their growth provided bases for heretics and a consequent drain on the military forces of the government; economically they aggravated the shortage of labor both directly and by extension of celibacy, cut down income from taxes, and, in this first period, contributed no important products or services to the surrounding society.

Thus Constantine's empire was from the beginning a structure of mutually repellent elements. The monasteries were antisocial; the alliance with the organized Church entailed the hostility of discontented parties within the organization, as well as those expelled (the heretics) and rival religions. The "New Rome" (Constantinople) was in obvious rivalry to the old; its location in the eastern half of the empire would necessitate the creation of a practically independent center of command for the German frontier. The new imperial council and the old Roman senate (still the richest body in the empire) were barely on speaking terms. The government was composed of two separate structures, the army and the civil government. The army was held in control by balancing the first-class troops against the frontier guards, and the first-class troops themselves were a mosaic of forces of different types from different backgrounds.

Similarly, the civil government was composed of half a dozen great departments, each used to spying on the other.

The burden of this complex structure fell on the officials of the cities and the peasants from whom they had to squeeze the produce. The system reduced many officials to bankruptcy and many peasants to serfdom, and it further exacerbated the age-old hostility between city and countryside which had been a weakness of all Greco-Roman civilization. In Syria and Egypt, where the countryside still spoke Aramaic (Syriac) and Egyptian (Coptic) while the cities spoke Greek, this hostility was particularly serious. Finally, the whole structure was now surrounded on north, east, and south by enemies, ready at the first sign of weakness to invade and plunder. Nevertheless, the Constantinian structure survived for three hundred years.

Its survival was largely due to the fragmentation of the army and the solidity of the bureaucracy. Generals, whose men might revolt if they were removed, were always counterbalanced by other generals. The great bureaucrats had no militant following, beneath each was a line of lesser bureaucrats, every one anxious first to keep his own place, next, to advance. From 324 to 602 no emperor in the east was overthrown by a usurper. In the west, however, where the balance of elements in the military forces was not preserved, the emperors, falling more and more under the power of their generals, became mere puppets; at last (shortly before 500) the office disappeared.

The failure in the west to control the army was partly the result of geographical factors, partly of personality and chance. Until 375 the emperors were military men who kept strong holds on their armies; then the throne passed to Gratian, a bookish adolescent. The resultant revolts and civil wars produced a series of juvenile and incompetent emperors under whom the central control rapidly disintegrated. They also stripped the northern frontiers of their best troops and left them open to the barbarians. The Rhine frontier was overrun in 406-407 by the Alans, Sueves, and Vandals; Rome was sacked by the Visigoths in 410; Italy, Gaul, Spain, and finally North Africa were successively looted; Carthage fell in 439. Such fragments of the empire as could be patched up in the wake of the barbarians were necessarily dominated by the military. Since the military was now predominantly barbarian "allies," its leaders could not, themselves, take over the imperial office. The last emperor to reign in Rome was merely deposed; he was not important enough to be killed.

The survival of the empire in the east, like its fall in the west, was due to a combination of geographic factors, personalities, and chance. Geographically its dangerous frontier was shorter and more easily defensible, roughly 800 miles as against 1,300. Of these 800 dangerous miles, about

250 were on the eastern frontier bounded by Persia. The Persians normally observed treaties, and they had no intention of leaving their homes and moving en masse into the Roman territories, as the barbarians did. The major barbarian powers had to be faced only along the lower Danube, which was large enough to make a good boundary. South of the Danube a defensible mountain barrier ran across Thrace, south of that the straits separating Asia Minor from Europe were impassable to barbarians who had no fleets. Consequently the rulers in the east were less dependent on their armies. Further, when the succession of strong emperors in the east was first broken, in 395, adroit ministers managed—after a few uneasy years—to secure a generation of comparative peace during which dangerous commanders were eliminated and the tradition of civilian administration was firmly established.

The army, now about 350,000 men in the east alone, had been split by the Constantinian tradition into some 250,000 second-class troops along the frontiers and about 100,000 first-class troops. These latter were now split into two classes and five armies, each with its own commander in chief, kept in check by his rivals. At the same time the landward fortifications of Constantinople were strengthened. Thus when barbarian pressure again became acute the government, secure in its capital, could bargain with the barbarians, if necessary fight them, if defeated let them loot the northern provinces until the exhaustion of those forced them to move to the west. In such bargaining the eastern government could draw on money accumulated from the Greek islands, Asia Minor, Syria, Cyprus, Palestine, Egypt, and Cyrenaica which, though often disturbed by riots or border raids, were in the main secure. The same resources paid its troops and kept them quiet.

In spite of these advantages the history of the eastern empire was far from tranquil. The northern provinces were invaded in the early 400's by the Visigoths, in the 430's by the Huns, in the later 400's by the Ostrogoths, in the early 500's by the Bulgars, in the later 500's by the Avars, not to mention lesser peoples. But Constantinople stood off all attacks, the straits barred progress to the south, and the waves of invaders spent their force, often in fighting each other. Wars with Persia ended disastrously in 363, but the Persians were content with the settlement they then extorted and there was little more fighting until the early sixth century. During the fifth century the government was repeatedly in danger of falling into the power of its Gothic "allies," forces which had been employed as units under their own leaders. To balance these the emperors depended chiefly on troops from Isauria (the southeastern nub of Asia Minor), mountaineers who took advantage of this dependence to raid their neighbors, striking as far as Palestine. Eventually, in 488, the Goths went west to the

greener pastures of Italy and the government shortly thereafter crushed the Isaurians.

Internal security, thus restored, was the basis for Justinian's attempt to reconquer the west, beginning in 533. His generals retook most of the north African coast, the southern coast of Spain, the western Mediterranean islands, Italy, and Dalmatia. This expansion frightened Persia, which began war in 540. Pressure on the northern front continued, too. Nevertheless Justinian held his conquests. His successors even survived another war with Persia, though it prevented them from doing much to stem the Lombard invasion of Italy or the Visigothic reconquest of Spain. What finally brought down the structure was not foreign defeat, but, as in the third century, loss of control of the army. Economies ordered by the emperor Maurice in 602 occasioned a revolt of the northern army, which killed him and installed one of its officers, Phocas, who proved a tyrant. The eastern army revolted. The Persians took the opportunity to overrun Syria and Asia Minor. In 610 Heraclius, son of the exarch (governor general) of Africa overthrew Phocas. Now the Persians advanced into Egypt and the northern barbarians (this time, the Avars) to the walls of Constantinople. But the city held out, the Avars were defeated, and after another year's fighting the Persians were forced to withdraw. The Roman and Persian empires, however, had both been exhausted by the effort and neither could now stop the Arabian tribes organized by Muhammad and his followers. Syria was lost in the 630's, Egypt, Cyrenaica, and Tripolitania in the 640's, and the Roman Empire was reduced to its Byzantine form.

For Further Reading

Bury, J., *History of the Later Roman Empire from the Death of Theodosius I to the Death of Justinian*.

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21 Late Roman Society and Culture

Throughout the three hundred years from Constantine's death in 337 to the reign of Heraclius in the 600's the political structure of the Constantinian empire was preserved with only peripheral changes of its form, though its extent was altered by loss of the west in the fifth century, and its economic, social, and cultural character was altered by continued development.

Economically the most conspicuous characteristic of the period was the transfer of property. The cities and their temples, the well-to-do, land-owning families of the cities, and the merchants and shopkeepers, as well as the small landowners of the countryside, were stripped of their holdings. The barbarians, the emperor's estates, the great landowners (especially the Roman senators), the bureaucrats, the churches, and the monasteries acquired some of this wealth, but much was destroyed in war and perhaps 20 per cent of the cultivated land was abandoned because high taxation made it unprofitable to farm marginal tracts.

The most important factors in the transfer of property were conquests and raids, imperial confiscations, taxes, bureaucratic extortion, and private donations. Most of the western empire changed hands by conquest in the fifth century and much of it again in the sixth. In the east no territory was officially lost, but repeated barbarian raids led to the abandonment of much land in the northern provinces and also in Egypt and Cyrenaica. The Vandals, after their conquest of North Africa in the 430's, reintroduced large-scale piracy to the western Mediterranean and raided the coasts for a century.

Within the empire Constantine's confiscation took the properties of the cities and temples, eventually the cities were allowed a third of the incomes from their former lands for maintenance of their buildings. Confiscations, following occasional revolts and frequent trials for treason, sorcery, or heresy, brought a steady flow of lands to the imperial estates. The impoverishment of the middle class and the peasants by taxation led to the transfer of their lands to the estates of larger landowners and of the emperors, the largest of all.

What the emperors took with one hand they gave with the other, but not to the same people. Taxes went primarily to support the army, the court, and the bureaucracy; these were the largest regular items in the budget. Extraordinary imperial grants vastly enriched the churches and later the monasteries, as well as the great officials of the court and their

- A.D. c. 250 Plotinus, beginning of Neoplatonism
- 330 Constantinople becomes the imperial residence
- 331 Constantine's expropriation of the temple's properties, Constantine's endowments of Christian churches, Eusebius' fusion of classical and Biblical historiographic traditions
- 351 Apollo expelled from Daphne by the relics of St. Babylas
- 381 The Council of Constantinople, the doctrine of the Trinity completed
- 391 Theodosius I prohibits all pagan worship
- 400 The Senate of Constantinople, mainly bureaucrats, has 2,000 members; tax collectors commonly need military escorts
- 410 Sack of Rome by Visigoths, followed by Christian apologetics, notably Augustine's *City of God*
- 431 The Council of Ephesus, Nestorius condemned, half of Syria alienated from the imperial Church
- 439 Capture of Carthage by the Vandals, the West completely overrun by barbarians, piracy rife in the western Mediterranean; the Imperial administration in the East begins to use Greek
- 451 The Council of Chalcedon, the Patriarch of Alexandria condemned, Egypt alienated; the system of patriarchal jurisdictions completed
- 496 Conversion of the Franks to Christianity
- 500 Many big landlords have private military forces and prisons
- 529 The Platonic Academy in Athens closed; all pagans ordered to become Christians; revolt of the Samaritans
- 534 Completion of Justinian's law code
- 560 Samaritans and Jews join in revolt
- 641 Death of Heraclius; loss of Egypt to the Arabs; the Gospels have been translated into ten languages, Christian missionaries are working in China

families and favorites; thus political power was consolidated as economic power.

Private giving, which had formerly gone to the towns for games, baths, gymnasiums, theaters, and the like, now went largely to the churches for buildings, decoration and upkeep, the salaries of the clergy, and the support of the monks, but also for alms to the poor, hospitals, orphanages, maintenance of widows and unmarried girls (in ecclesiastical terminology, “virgins”), and other charities. In the pagan world charity had been almost exclusively a concern of the rich and a means to civic honors, Christianity made it also a duty for the poor and a means to eternal salvation. The churches’ income from donations was therefore more widely based than that of the cities had been. Ecclesiastical wealth made religious offices attractive, the more so because celibacy was not yet required. Both simony and the sale of offices in the bureaucracy increased during the fifth century. By that time, too, the monastic movement has been taken over by polite society. Most monasteries lived on their endowments and paid taxes; manual labor by monks was exceptional in the east and unknown in the west. The clergy, the monks, and the bureaucrats were three new, or newly enlarged, groups whose labor, if any, was at best nonproductive, and whose care and feeding were an additional burden on the peasantry. It is worth noting, finally, that neither trade nor industry figured among the most important forms of exchange of property in these three centuries. Far more capital changed hands through conquest and robbery, taxation and governmental expenditures, official corruption and private charity.

Important changes in the social structure accompanied these movements of capital. The Orientalization of the imperial court and of the great households imitating the court increased the number and influence of eunuchs. Below the court circle, the higher bureaucrats, especially in the east, began to constitute a new hereditary aristocracy, as son followed father into the administration, perpetuating family power and augmenting family fortunes. By the end of the fourth century the senate of Constantinople, largely composed of such families, had 2,000 members.

Great ecclesiastical families also began to spring up in the east, in spite of the rule that bishops, priests, and deacons might not marry after ordination. But in the west, the bishops of Rome, from the end of the fourth century, decreed that married men, if ordained, should thereafter abstain from intercourse. (The efficacy of this decree is difficult to estimate.) Since orthodox monasticism also required celibacy, church officials had to be replenished continuously from other classes.

While these privileged classes expanded, those which had to bear the burden of taxation steadily diminished in spite of repeated laws fixing their members in their callings. The well-to-do of the cities escaped into the

bureaucracy and the church. Lesser provincial administrators, underpaid and overburdened, also found the priesthood attractive. Lawyers, too, found the church congenial, they contributed not a little to the disputes about heresy. As the bourgeoisie thus shrank, tax revenues declined. Hence the economies, finally fatal, in the upkeep of the army. Already in the fifth century the inferior frontier troops had begun to be assigned plots of land to cultivate in lieu of salaries; their training and effectiveness suffered.

Finally the peasants, who bore the bulk of the burden, fled wherever they could. Many went into the monasteries, some became migratory agricultural laborers, some got into the army, some into the church, some into the cities. Everywhere the shortage of farm labor became more and more serious. In consequence the legal condition of tenant farmers, whom the Constantinian polity had bound to the land as serfs, was gradually reduced almost to slavery. They had to pay taxes as well as their rent to the landlord, they could not sue him (except for overcharging in rent). They were forbidden to alienate property, be ordained, or enter a monastery without their landlord's consent. Since they were exempted from military service, even conscription could not set them free.

Inevitably the peasants came to hate both the government and the rich. Their hatred manifested itself in many ways. Sometimes, seizing upon ecclesiastical quarrels, they supported whichever faction opposed the government. In Africa, Spain, and Gaul peasants repeatedly supported political revolts. In Africa and Egypt many peasants joined the marauding tribes along the fringes of the cultivated land; these tribes became so populous that considerable military forces failed to contain them. Everywhere men took to the mountains, woods, and deserts to live as bandits. The world became full of robbers.

Even when they remained on the land, the peasants violently resisted the tax collectors; the collectors, in turn, made ever more use of torture. By the end of the fourth century collectors commonly had to be backed up by military force. Much of the army was tied down to garrison duty, preventing revolts and helping to collect taxes. This lowered its efficiency and raised the number of troops needed. Military expenditures rose, and taxes with them. By the end of the fifth century landlords commonly had their own illegal bands of armed retainers—and private prisons. This situation made effective resistance to the barbarians impossible. Large landowners and city authorities did not dare give arms and military training to the peasantry. They preferred to risk an invasion by a few barbarians rather than a general peasant revolt. When the barbarians did break in, the peasants either took the opportunity to revolt and plunder for themselves or joined the invaders; they rarely did anything to resist them. Not that they were unable to resist. For instance, the barbarians had no difficulty

overrunning Spain, but the forces sent to drive them from the country had less trouble with them than with peasant revolts. Moreover, when the Goths finally established themselves, their violation of local martyr's shrine led to a popular rising in which they were defeated. Had there been any such popular support for the Roman government, it is inconceivable that the barbarian tribes, which normally numbered about 20,000 fighting men, should have overrun Italy, France, Spain, and North Africa and dominated a population of about 10 million. The Roman Empire in the west fell only because most of its subjects would not fight to preserve it.

While the empire was going to pieces the church was extending and consolidating its conquests. Conversions in northern Mesopotamia had begun as early as the second, perhaps even the first, century; during the third and fourth they were extended to Persia and beyond. The official adoption of Christianity in the Roman Empire made it a suspect religion in the Persian; the church there had many martyrs. Armenia was converted before the time of Constantine, and became a base for further conversion in the Caucasus. The fourth century saw the conversion of the Irish to "orthodox" (Nicæan) Christianity and of the Goths and Vandals to Arianism. Conversion of the Germanic peoples continued through the fifth century and thereafter; the great prize was the conversion of Clovis and consequently of his Franks in 496. In the fourth century the conversion of Ethiopia was begun; the Nubians adopted Christianity in the time of Justinian.

The consolidation of Christianity within the empire was a complex process of which the three chief aspects were its acquisition of adherents and property, the organization of church government, administration, and discipline, and the determination of doctrine. In all of these the church relied on help from the state. Except for the brief restoration of paganism by Julian in 361-363, imperial patronage continued; this sufficed to convert the prudent. From the end of the fourth century pagan worship, whether public or private, was prohibited under severe penalties. All temples were closed; many were granted to individuals for destruction or to Christian communities for use as churches; more were destroyed by Christian vandalism which went unpunished. The Christians' fanatical hatred of worship of other gods was in striking contrast to the tolerance of many pagans, who were willing to accept Jesus as a new deity. Fanaticism proved an advantage; tolerance facilitated conversions and fanaticism made them profitable. In the fifth century pagans were gradually barred from the civil service and the army, then from legal practice, finally, under Justinian, from teaching. In 529 Justinian closed the Platonic Academy in Athens and ordered all pagans to become Christians. Those who refused were exiled, their property confiscated. Agents were sent out to destroy temples

and forcibly convert the peasantry in districts still pagan. Monasticism had already been important in conversion of country districts, it would continue to be so beyond the imperial frontiers. Much had also been done by great Christian landowners who converted their tenants. These methods reduced paganism to unimportance, though in remote country districts all around the Mediterranean it survived the empire.

However, Christianity had competitors within the empire—its two half sisters, Judaism and Samaritanism, and the strange religion founded by Mani, a Mesopotamian prophet, reportedly of Persian family, who during the middle of the third century had represented himself as the final revelator of whom the Buddha, Zoroaster, and Jesus had been forerunners. With adherents scattered from the Atlantic coast to China, Manicheism was an international religion, as such it was relentlessly persecuted by both Rome and Persia, the one intent on using Christianity, the other Zoroastrianism, to consolidate their realms.

Judaism and Samaritanism were dealt with more gingerly, since they were protected through most of the fourth century by the tradition of Roman law, which authorized their practices. Here Christian vandalism took the lead; destruction of synagogues followed close on destruction of temples. Early in the fifth century the erection of new synagogues was prohibited, and thereafter Jews and Samaritans, like pagans, were expelled step by step from the civil service and the army, from all public dignities, and from the practice of law. These measures were followed in the sixth century by others yet more severe. Many synagogues of the Samaritans, in particular, were destroyed. They revolted in 529 and 560, in the latter revolt being joined by the Jews. Both Jews and Samaritans welcomed the Persian and Arab invasions of Palestine and took these opportunities to square accounts by destroying churches and massacring the Christians.

The church's growth complicated the problems of disciplining its members, administering its property, and governing its organization. Since the great persecutions, when many of the baptized had sinned by apostasy, postbaptismal sins had been deemed forgivable—the few who denied this became heretics. Practice required that those who had sinned after baptism should confess to their bishop or his deputy and should be assigned penance, usually severe, after the performance of which they would be readmitted to communion. During the fourth century the increase of infant baptism and the flood of time-serving converts lowered the standard of Christian behavior and made penance both more common and easier. Finally a scandal in Constantinople in the late fourth century led to the abolition of the confessor's office and penance was left to the individual's conscience. The east thus temporarily gave up the task of disciplining the laity save for open scandal or heresy, for which the penalty was excom-

munication, but in the west the penitential discipline was preserved and with it the power of the church as an agency of forgiveness. Discipline of the clergy was always in the hands of the bishop, who could order his clerics about as he chose. The monks vowed to obey the superior of the monastery, and Justinian put all monasteries under the jurisdiction of the bishops. Finally the bishop controlled the administration and disposition of church property.

Thus the enormous growth of church property and personnel caused a corresponding growth in the power of the bishops. By Justinian's time the personal income of the bishop of a rich see was as great as that of the highest government officials, and the patriarchs were in a class with the senators. In a good-sized see the cathedral alone would have fifty to a hundred clergy; in a patriarchal see it would have three or four hundred—mostly in the minor orders—to say nothing of monks and nuns. Bishops accordingly lived in great style, and episcopal elections were often violently contested; one in Rome left 137 dead in a day's fighting. Therefore the rules were more sharply defined and the approval of the presiding bishop of the regional council, now called "the metropolitan," was made prerequisite. Further organization and consolidation soon followed. Finally in 451 the Council of Chalcedon completed the process by which most imperial territories were subjected to five great sees—Egypt and Cyrenaica to Alexandria, Palestine to Jerusalem, Syria to Antioch, most of Asia Minor, Thrace, and Greece to Constantinople, and the west to Rome. The incumbents of these five sees came to be known as "patriarchs," by distinction from the mere metropolitans, their subordinates.

This consolidation, however, made conflicts between the sees even sharper. Rome and Alexandria were jealous of the growth of Constantinople and tried to break up its power by attacking the orthodoxy of its bishops. The fourth century offered little opportunity for this tactic. Constantine's successor in the east, Constantius, was Arian and his successor, Julian, pagan; subsequent emperors until Theodosius generally avoided religious controversies, and when Theodosius organized the Council of Constantinople in 381, to restore the Nicæan position, the opposition had disintegrated. (The council declared the Holy Ghost of the same substance as the Father and the Son and so completed the official trinity, "one God in three persons.")

In the fifth century, however, a controversy broke out over "Christology"—the relation of God the Son to Jesus the Christ, in whom the Son was incarnate. Since the physical Jesus had been born, suffered, and died, he had to be human. But since the church worshiped "Jesus Christ the Son of God," Jesus had to be united with the Son. This much was at first admitted. But was the union merely one of agreement and cooperation, as

partners are united in a company, or was it some sort of mixture or fusion?

Something like the former point of view was energetically defended by Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople, who was so indiscreet as to attack, in consequence, the popular use of the term "Mother of God" as a description of Mary, whose cult was rapidly growing. This gave the Patriarch of Alexandria, Cyril, his chance. He allied with Rome and secured Nestorius' condemnation in the Council of Ephesus, 431. Constantinople was discredited and Antioch, where Nestorius had been very popular, was deeply divided.*

At Rome, however, the triumph of Alexandria produced deep uneasiness. In the next generation the Roman patriarch Leo allied with Constantinople, and the Council of Chalcedon in 451 condemned the Alexandrians for heresy because they taught that the two natures in Jesus Christ had been fused into one, the human lost in the divine as a wine drop in the sea. Leo declared that the union was perfect, but the natures remained perfectly distinct; this contradiction in terms became the orthodox position. The monks and peasants of Egypt and the populace of Alexandria solidly supported their patriarch; when orthodox patriarchs were sent out thereafter they needed military guards. The "monophysite" (one-nature) position also won much support in Syria, Asia Minor, and Armenia; indeed, the Armenian, Coptic, Ethiopic, and "Jacobite" Syrian churches still hold to various modifications of it.

The imperial government supported the decisions of the councils, expelled the heretical bishops and clergy, and made over their church properties to orthodox appointees. But the heresies became matters of intense popular dispute, and the adherents of the heretics fought vigorously to defend their clergy and churches. As a result, these doctrinal squabbles not only damaged the authority of the eastern patriarchates, but also caused widespread violence, tied down large numbers of troops, and destroyed much property.

The triumph of the church was thus a Pyrrhic victory, but it was a victory. All over the empire churches were erected from the stones of former temples and a Christian culture from the elements of the former pagan world. The chief elements lost were the pagan cults and the amenities of the small cities—the games, the gymnasiums, the police and fire brigades, the libraries, and so on. But these were not entirely lost. Athletic and gladiatorial games were replaced by chariot races as the great popular amusement. Shows in which wild animals were killed continued

* Many of Nestorius' followers later emigrated to Mesopotamia, where the Nestorian church eventually became the principal form of Christianity within the Persian empire and carried its missionary work as far as China.

popular. The baths remained, in spite of Christian anathemas, the major centers of relaxation. The larger towns still employed professors and doctors. Monastic and church libraries began to accumulate.

The techniques of classical culture were also continued with little change, though some things were taken over from the barbarians. (By 325 the wardrobe of a high Roman official in Egypt included breeches.) On the farms the peasants perpetuated from generation to generation their traditional skills. The knowledge of engineering for irrigation and the like was still available when there were funds to employ it. Military techniques had been extended by the increased use of cavalry and missile weapons, although the old Roman training for infantry maneuvers and camp fortification was no more. In the fine arts the chaos of the third century had produced a shortage of skilled craftsmen in the provinces and a consequent breakdown of traditions, particularly in sculpture. Of the resultant untrained work some was brilliant, some merely gauche. The early fourth century saw a vigorous revival of the older skills; thereafter stylization set in and became, by the time of Justinian, grotesque. Some arts, however, particularly those *de grande luxe*, thrived on stylization; for patterned silks, cloisonné enamels on gold, carved porphyry, and gold coinage the late empire is unrivaled. In the great villas and imperial churches mosaic decoration glittered as never before. The churches were at first basilicas—elongated barns—but deforestation (to which their erection and the heating of the baths alike contributed) led to increased use of stone vaulting and eventually to the creation of the great domed churches of which Constantinople's St. Sophia (Holy Wisdom), built for Justinian, is the supreme example—the most skillful, daring, breathtaking, magnificent achievement of all ancient architecture.

Classical medicine was perpetuated with an ever increasing dosage of fantastic pharmacopoeia. The elements of classical law were now collected and codified, the codification carried through under Justinian becoming the basis of most modern European legal codes. The pagan tradition of historical writing was continued by many writers and produced in Ammianus Marcellinus the second greatest historian in Latin literature. Of his account of the empire from Nerva to the death of Valens we have only the concluding books beginning with the later years of Constantius, but these tell us what his subject was. They deal with that section of the history in which he himself participated as a high military official and of which his penetrating vision saw the tragedy.

In philosophy the age saw a final revival of pagan scholarship and speculation, on the one hand a great series of commentaries on the works of Plato and Aristotle, on the other, Neoplatonism, a heroic effort to reconcile the classics of pagan literature which everyone officially admired,

the ultimate monotheism of Greek philosophy which everyone officially accepted, and the world of demons, magic, and astrology in which everyone actually believed. Plotinus, about 250, the earliest representative of Neoplatonism, was primarily concerned with philosophical thought as a means of ascent from the world to mystical union with "the One." His successors, however, took over his way of salvation and made it a religion. Magical rites and pagan ceremonies served them for sacraments; the Greek classics were their sacred literature, which they rendered innocuous by allegorical exegesis, as the Christians did the Bible. The things they lacked, for competition with Christianity, were a simple story and a simple style capable of appealing to the common man.

Stylistically they were bound by the tradition of classical rhetoric, the principal subject taught in the secondary schools. This rhetoric attempted to teach the students to write in styles elaborated from those of Greek orators seven centuries dead. The resultant compositions were almost incomprehensible to anyone who had not gone through the training. Neoplatonism therefore never stood a chance against the superior rhetoric of the Gospels. But the classical rhetoricians had a firm hold on the professorships in the principal cities, training under them was the first step of a barrister's career. This was a public misfortune, for such training was likely to produce men incapable not only of leadership but even of clear, simple thought and expression. Moreover, it inculcated the ancient beliefs that practical questions, manual labor, manufacturing, and trade are all vulgar, and that dialectic, not experiment, is the way to knowledge. One reason for the decline of the empire was classical education.

All these elements of classical culture—medicine, law, history, philosophy, rhetoric, and education—not only survived into Christian times, but were appropriated by Christianity, thanks, largely, to the conversion of the city councilmen and lower government servants. But the appropriation was superficial. Greek was now almost lost in the west; Latin survived in the east only for those who were going into the upper levels of government or legal interpretation, as distinct from pleading: its use by the central administration ended about 440. In the west there was considerable translation of Greek works into Latin. The Greeks generally did not think Latin works worth translating.

As Christians with classical training increased in number, so did Christian works on classical models. Neoplatonic ontology had its counterpart in the theological speculations as to the Trinity, creation, and incarnation. Commentaries on the philosophic writers and the Homeric poems were matched by commentaries on the Bible using the same methods and reaching much the same conclusions. The rhetorical effusions of the pagans were more than matched by rhetorical Christian sermons. The pagan tradi-

tion of historiography was continued by Christian authors like Procopius, who in Justinian's time almost equaled the classical historians—as a scandalmonger. Eusebius of Caesarea wrote the earliest preserved church history and made it, perhaps by laziness, a new type of history, the annotated source book with specification and purportedly exact quotation of the sources. (Classical authors had preferred to rewrite sources in their own style and generally without acknowledgments) Another element in Eusebius' books, this derived from the Bible, is the intent to demonstrate that human history is the working out of a divine plan. This concern was sharpened after 410 when Christian writers had to answer the pagan argument that Rome had prospered while it worshiped the pagan gods, and fallen when it started to worship Christ. The most successful answer, Augustine's *City of God*, was an elaboration (in twenty-two books) of the position: Who cares about Rome? All that matters is the Church.

Not only did Christianity perpetuate the forms of classical culture, it also extended them to the lower classes within the empire and the barbarians without. By the end of the sixth century the Gospels had been translated into Coptic, Nubian, Ethiopic, Syriac, Sogdian, Armenian, Georgian, Gothic, Thracian, and Latin. In all of these languages except Sogdian, Latin, and perhaps Thracian, the translation was the first written literature; in almost all it was soon followed by translation of other Christian works of classical forms. From these beginnings a considerable number of these languages developed native literatures of at least some classical coloration. Both inside the empire and beyond it, the monasteries not only converted the rustics but educated some of them.

While culture was thus extended to the lower classes, lower-class elements became prominent in the culture. Many of the emperors were men of military training and little cultivation. They surrounded themselves with men of their own type, not only in the high military offices, but also in the legal ones. It is probably in part from the influence of this circle that the law became appallingly brutal. Savage penalties like burning men alive became frequent, tortures atrocious beyond description were commonly used on all but persons of the highest classes, and sometimes even on them. But these changes were too widespread to be explained solely by the influence of the uppermost court circle. Much was probably due to the cumulative effect of the prominence of torture through the centuries in popular entertainment, more to the gradual brutalization of the people by poverty, taxation, and barbarian inroads. To poverty and the pressure of taxation must certainly be attributed much of the vast corruption and oppression at all levels of government.

With these changes are to be associated the fantastic growth of superstition and credulity in all classes. Origen in 250 recognized that the eclipse

reported by Matthew as occurring at the time of the crucifixion (the day before a full moon) could not have happened; he concluded that the statement in Matthew was an interpolation. Augustine, 150 years later, said the impossibility of an eclipse proved the occurrence of a miracle. The increase of poverty and economic and governmental pressure led to a decline of mental as well as physical health. This was reflected not only in the terrible tortures, but in the fanaticism and violence of the religious conflicts about incomprehensible formulas, and in the universal atmosphere of suspicion which makes this age seem an example of mass paranoia. Outright insanity seems also to have become more frequent, and many forms of it were commonly understood as the results of demonic possession. Demons were everywhere, every church had a large staff of exorcists, and they were kept busy, rabbis were no less famous than saints for their abilities to command spirits, all philosophers believed in the efficacy of magic, and many considered it the most important branch of philosophy. Reasoning, but reasoning from fantastic premises, increased, while the rationalistic attitude (the most precious legacy of classical Greece), which is largely a matter of common sense in the choice of premises, survived only in books. Medicine was overrun with recipes for amulets

Even more efficacious than amulets were the relics of holy men, especially martyrs, whose cult had grown up everywhere since the persecutions of the fourth century. Such relics were sovereign against demons; the expulsion of Apollo from Daphne (a suburb of Antioch) by the relics of St. Babylas was world-famous. Beside the relics of martyrs were those of Biblical worthies; these were constantly being "discovered"; the most famous such discovery was that attributed to Helena, Constantine's mother, of "the true cross." Special churches, built to house the most effective relics, became centers of pilgrimage and famous for their miraculous cures. In the pagan world the sick had gone to shrines of Asclepius and Sarapis for similar cures, but now the going, the pilgrimage, became a religious exercise; healthy pilgrims outnumbered the sick, and centers of pilgrimage, especially Jerusalem, were thronged. Holy men, most often monks, were honored no less than martyrs, and this in their lifetimes. Everywhere saints took over the old gods' functions: they sent rain, averted storms and blight, drove away pestilence and enemies, and so on. An oceanic literature recounted their lives and miracles. And most important was the cult of Mary, the all-holy Mother of God.

Even this cloud of protectors was not sufficient to keep away sin. The wide extension of the consciousness of sin was one of the major results of the triumph of Christianity. This consciousness was less an awareness of individual transgressions than a perception of the necessary imperfection of life in the physical and particularly in the social world. "The world [mean-

ing lay society], the flesh, and the devil" were almost three aspects of man's fallen condition, from which Christianity was primarily a means of escape. Escape was salvation. A life lived "in the world" could hardly lead to salvation, and the further a man was involved in the world, the worse his chances. Because of these common assumptions the church was not primarily concerned to provide guidance for government, nor even for life in the world, its concern was to get men out. Men who did live "in the world" accepted the prevailing conception of this world as a vestibule to an eternal life. The quality of that life, whether bliss or torment, would be determined by a man's relation to the church and its all-sufficient sacraments. But for a Christian who survived the sacraments they were only the beginning. Beyond them lay the wilderness of the spiritual life. Even those who physically fled from the world had still the flesh and the devil to cope with. Introspection, hitherto the luxury of a few philosophers, became now a major concern of millions of baptized Christians. And the officially approved orientation of Western man was shifted from the world without to the world within.

Official approval did not, of course, entail universal practice. The peasants continued to be concerned primarily with getting food from the soil. Had they not, the whole society would have collapsed and the religious would have had no leisure for introspection. The hundreds of thousands in the army, the tens of thousands in the civil government, the unnumberable laity who accepted Christianity because it was the best way to get on, all continued their customary mundane concerns. But the new orientation was now represented by an organization even larger than the civil government, and the government officially recognized and supported that organization's claims. From now on, Western history would be one of continuous adjustments between the demands and representatives of the new orientation and of the old. The ancient world was a thing of the past; the Middle Ages had begun.

For Further Reading

Dill, S., *Roman Society in the Last Century of the Western Empire.*

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The Arabs

22 The Arabs and the Rise of Islam

Beyond the fact that they originated in the Arabian Peninsula, the earliest history of the Arabs is not well established. Indigenous sources exist in the form of legends, although aside from a few inscriptions, nothing in writing has been found. However, the Arabs are mentioned in ancient chronicles of the Persians, Romans, Greeks, Hebrews, and other peoples of the pre-Christian and early Christian era, and important ruins and small artifacts which are still being discovered confirm these early contacts. But it was only with Muhammad's coming and the foundation of Islam in the seventh century A.D. that the history of the Arabs began to be recorded.

The Arabs of pre-Islamic times represented two ethnic groups: those of the south and those of the north. The difference between the two groups reflects the duality of pre-Islamic history and culture as well as geography, for the vast desert of central Arabia created a natural boundary between them. The northerners were primarily nomads; the southerners possessed a more settled, urban civilization.

Whatever their exact geographic origin, the Arabs of the south possessed, by the end of the second millennium B.C., an advanced culture similar to that of Egypt and Mesopotamia. They had a tradition of urban living, a highly developed social organization, a unique system of irrigation, and a relatively advanced technology.

During the 1,700-odd years before the advent of Islam, several kingdoms flourished in this region. The most important of these was the Minaean-Sabean-Himyarite succession of states.

Sometimes one state was dominant; at other times several kingdoms coexisted. The remains of their dams, fortified cities, temples, and castles—some of which still exist—indicate the sophistication and advanced level of their civilization. This civilization was based primarily on agriculture and trade, but much of its wealth came from the production of frank-

B.C.	853	First reference to the Arabs in an inscription of the Assyrian Shalmaneser III
900?–A.D.	530	The Minaean-Sabean-Himyarite succession of states in south Arabia
	24	Expedition of Aelius Gallus to south Arabia
A.D.	105–106	Fall of the Nabataean kingdom
	273	Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra, captured by the Emperor Aurelian
	530	Christian Abyssinia's invasion of south Arabia
	570?	Birth of Muhammad in Mecca
	575	Persian occupation of south Arabia
	602	Fall of the Lakhmids, Arab vassals of Sassanid Persia
	608	Building of the Kaaba in Mecca as the main shrine in pagan Arabia
	622	Hijra (migration) of Muhammad from Mecca to Medina—beginning of the Islamic era
	624	Muslims defeat the Meccans at the Battle of Badr
	630	Mecca is conquered by Muhammad and becomes the spiritual center of Islam
	632	Death of Muhammad; succession of Abu Bakr as the first caliph
	633–637	Arabs conquer Syria and Iraq
	634	Death of Abu Bakr; succession of Umar
	639–642	Arabs conquer Egypt
	640–643	Arabs conquer Persia
	644	Murder of Umar; succession of Uthman
	656	Murder of Uthman; succession of Ali, first civil war in Islam
	657–659	Battle of Siffin; arbitration between Ali and Mu'awiya; the Kharijites
	661	Murder of Ali; succession of Mu'awiya; accession of the Umayyads with Damascus as the capital

incense and myrrh. In the ancient world these substances were as precious as gold and could be compared in importance to oil in the economy of the Middle East today. Both are gum resins extracted from trees that grow only in southern Arabia and Somalia. A complex organization was developed for producing and distributing these commodities, which not only enriched the Arabs but also brought them into contact with the peoples living in the lands bordering the Mediterranean Sea and the Indian Ocean.

From what we can learn from surviving inscriptions, intellectual life did not match commercial and agricultural and artistic achievements. It seems to have concentrated almost exclusively on formulating a legal code for the regulation of property relationships.

One of the south Arabian tribes, the Minaeans (who flourished in fertile northern Yemen between the eighth and third centuries B.C.), had camel caravans that traveled as far north as Memphis in Egypt and as far west as the Atlantic coastline of Africa. They also engaged in trade with Delos, in Greece.

The Sabeans eventually absorbed the Minaeans and other principalities and created a kingdom based on a feudal system of aristocratic families that prevented the rise of any strong, centralized system of government. In Western culture the Sabeans are commonly regarded as the symbol of ancient Arab civilization. The Old Testament narrative of Bilkis, the Queen of Sheba (Sabea), and her journey from Marib—the capital of Sabea—to visit Solomon, is one of the best-known stories of the Bible and an oft-repeated theme in Western art.

The Sabeans in turn were gradually taken over by the neighboring Himyarites. During the Hellenistic era, the Himyarites lost their chief source of prosperity when part of the Indian trade was diverted to Egypt, but in 24 B.C. they still had the strength to escape Roman domination by repulsing Aelius Gallus, the general sent by Augustus Caesar to conquer the area.

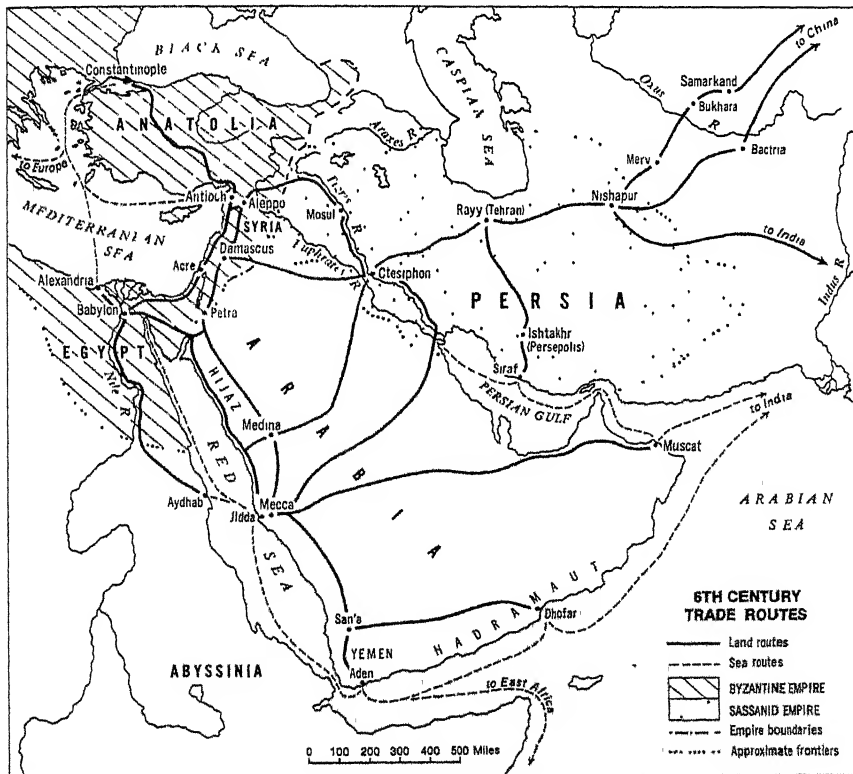
In the first few centuries A.D., Christianity came to Arabia. Judaism already had a foothold, and by A.D. 525, Judaism had gained such an influence in the Himyarite kingdom that the rulers themselves were converted and began to persecute the Christian population. This persecution, together with prodding from Byzantium—which wanted to strike a blow at its ancient adversary, Persia—led to Christian Abyssinia's invasion of south Arabia in A.D. 530. The Abyssinian governor, Abraha, conquered south Arabia, then tried to move northward, but he failed to advance beyond Mecca. Forty years later (575), his son and second successor lost south Arabia to Chosroes I, a Persian king of the Sassanid dynasty, and south Arabia remained a Persian province until the invasion of the Muslims.

Because of their pivotal geographic location between the Far East and India on the one hand, and the Mediterranean and western Europe on the

other, the Himyarites had been able to control important trade routes over which passed the fabled frankincense and myrrh as well as rare woods from south Arabia and exotic products from India and China on their way to the West.

One route from southwestern Arabia toward Syria ran through the Hijaz, with stops at Mecca and Medina, to Transjordan and Palestine. A western branch led to the Mediterranean, an eastern one to Damascus, Homs, Hama, and Aleppo. Another, chiefly concerned with Indian trade, went through the Persian Gulf, up the Euphrates, then westward through Syria to the Mediterranean.

These two main routes were instrumental in shaping the character of two Arab states in the north: the Nabataean kingdom at Petra ("the rose-red city, half as old as time") lay on the former route, the kingdom of Palmyra on the latter. These states, unlike the isolated kingdoms of the South, gravitated into the Hellenistic and Roman orbits. Although their peoples were unmistakably of Arab origin, their culture was strongly in-



fluenced by the Aramaic and Hellenistic civilizations, a fact confirmed by the impressive architectural ruins at Palmyra and Petra, by inscriptions on artifacts and coins, and by a study of their cults, which are of classical origin.

The Nabataean kingdom flourished from the fifth century B.C. and controlled an area extending from the Gulf of Aqaba to the Dead Sea, including a part of northern Hijaz. It lost its independence in the first century B.C. when it became a vassal of Rome, and it was absorbed into the Roman Empire in A.D. 105 when Trajan created *Provincia Arabia* with its capital at Petra.

The history of the kingdom of Palmyra, equally Aramaicized and Hellenized, and its relations with the Roman Empire is more dramatic. Situated in a fertile oasis, Palmyra controlled the caravan routes between the Euphrates and Syria. Its principal economic activities revolved around commerce and banking, but the archers of Palmyra became famous mercenaries. In the long duel between Rome and the Parthians, Palmyra sided with Rome and prospered accordingly. A pseudo-Roman city of temples and forums whose ruins still rise dramatically out of the desert was the result. In 260 Odenathus founded a ruling dynasty and asserted his independence from Rome. His widow Zenobia ruled after his death as regent for their son, but in 273 the Roman emperor reconquered Palmyra and destroyed the queen's glorious dreams of continued independence. Zenobia was captured, bound in chains of gold, and taken to Rome. She ended her days at a villa in Tivoli while her distant city abruptly fell, like Petra, into decline.

Poetry is the principal source of information on the material and spiritual life of the Bedouins and other Arabs. As they put it, their poetry was "the archive of their triumphs, the depository of their memories." Pre-Islamic poetry is an authentic and vivid product of this pagan era, of the nomadic, seminomadic, and sedentary Arabs of the north and central peninsula. The tribal prince-poet Imrul-Kais (d. 540) was a central figure among the Bedouin poets; he attracted many other poets to his circle and helped establish the classical Arabic tongue. The *Seven Odes*, an early collection of poems, gives a vivid if romanticized picture of desert life and sets the pattern for the ode form in Arabic literature.

Between the third and sixth centuries of the Christian era, the power of Rome waned in the north, as did the prosperity of the urbanized Yemenite states in the south. During this period the relations between these sedentary settlements of the Arab world and its nomads underwent a profound change. The civilized settlements of the south fell into decay, and the pastoral nomad once more replaced the peasant and the townsman.

The reasons for the resurgence of the nomads are cloudy, but they swallowed up whole settled communities and spread out not only over the entire peninsula but even beyond it to the borders of Byzantium.

The life of the desert can be reconstructed from Arabic sources. Although these are of a much later date, they reflect a reality which has remained unaltered for centuries—silhouetted against an unchanging, inscrutable landscape. Although there were a few stable settlements in the interior of the peninsula, such as Mecca and Medina, and some Jewish agricultural colonies in the northern Hijaz, they were tiny islands in a sea of steppe, rock, and shifting sand, and the majority of the people were Bedouins roaming over the desert in a monotonous seasonal pattern in search of pasturage. The Bedouin, with his camels, his tents, and his fierce tribal independence, was of ancient Semitic stock. He worshiped spirits dwelling in trees, streams, and stones. Social organization pivoted around the tribe. The foundation of Bedouin life was unswerving tribal loyalty which was based on collective responsibility, the protection of the individual and the guest against outside threats, and enforced when necessary with implacable vengeance.

The sheik, or sayyid, was the elected head of the tribe, chosen by the elders. His authority and prestige were mainly of a moral character. He was first among equals—*primus inter pares*. Usually he led the tribe in battle, acted as conciliator when peace was restored, and mediated tribal blood feuds. Leaving the tribe without assurance of alternative allegiance was to invite death, for to survive in the desert alone was impossible. Nevertheless the Bedouin turned away from every social organization that went beyond the orbit of his own tribal group.

The raid was a recognized outlet for aggressions and material gain and an almost everyday occurrence in the relations between tribes. The long, bloody, seemingly endless wars of pre-Islamic pagan Arabia sprang out of either raids or personal blood feuds which, because of the code of tribal solidarity and collective responsibility, involved whole tribes. Occasional truces were declared for religious holidays and fairs.

Both Byzantium and Persia tried to protect themselves against the barbaric tide by supporting new Arab buffer states on their frontiers. On the Byzantine border there were the seminomadic Ghassanids, vassals of Byzantium, while the Lakhmids served as satellites of the Persian Sassanids. These buffer states represent the transition from the civilized, settled life of Syria and Mesopotamia to the pure nomadism of the Syro-Arab desert and of central Arabia. Through them, foreign customs and ideas filtered into the world of the nomads, breaking up its monotony and softening its austerity.

The Ghassanids and the Lakhmids were enemies and, like their pa-

trons, constantly hoped to exterminate each other. Their wars and the personalities and careers of their rulers live on in the colorful songs of the Bedouin poets.

Muhammad, the man destined to be the Prophet of a new world religion as well as the spiritual and temporal leader of his peoples, was born in Mecca between A.D. 570 and 580. (Information about his early life and religious training is sparse and unreliable.) He came from a respectable but minor branch of the powerful Quraysh tribe. His father Abdallah died before his birth, his mother when he was only six. The orphan was raised first by his grandfather, Abd al-Muttalib, and then by his uncle, Abu Talib. During this period the family lived in humble circumstances, but Muhammad achieved wealth and position at the age of twenty-five by an advantageous marriage to the wealthy widow, Khadija, who was fifteen years his senior. Her money provided him with the ease and independence needed to investigate and appraise the religious situation in Arabia.

The strong monotheism, the theory of revelation, and the Biblical element in the Koran all suggest that Muhammad was exposed to both Christian and Jewish influences. However, his versions of Biblical stories indicate that they were indirectly acquired—most likely from Jewish and Christian traders and travelers whose religious knowledge was sketchy and apocryphal. That he was influenced by the *hanīfs*, native holy men dissatisfied with Arabian paganism, is also possible.

What compelled Muhammad to undertake his world-shaking career will always remain shrouded in mystery. What is clear is that he was disturbed and disgusted by the idolatry of his contemporaries and their lack of devotion to Allah, the true God. He was painfully aware that the disciplined religious life of the Jews and Christians about him contrasted sharply with the materialistic paganism of his compatriots. Time and again he withdrew to a cave under Mount Hira, near Mecca, for meditation and prayer. Here many insights came to him "like the breaking of the dawn."

According to tradition, Muhammad's Call, the legendary revelation of Allah, came suddenly and dramatically in 611, when he was about forty years old. Descriptions in the Koran, as well as a number of traditional stories, suggest that the Call was a flash of divine insight delivered by the angel Gabriel. Muhammad had no idea then of founding a new religion. His ambitions were of a more modest kind; he hoped to bring to his people a unified Arab revelation similar to that of the Christians and Jews. The early chapters of the Koran are brief and evangelistic, dealing mainly with the unity of God, the wickedness of idolatry and materialism, and the imminence of divine judgment.

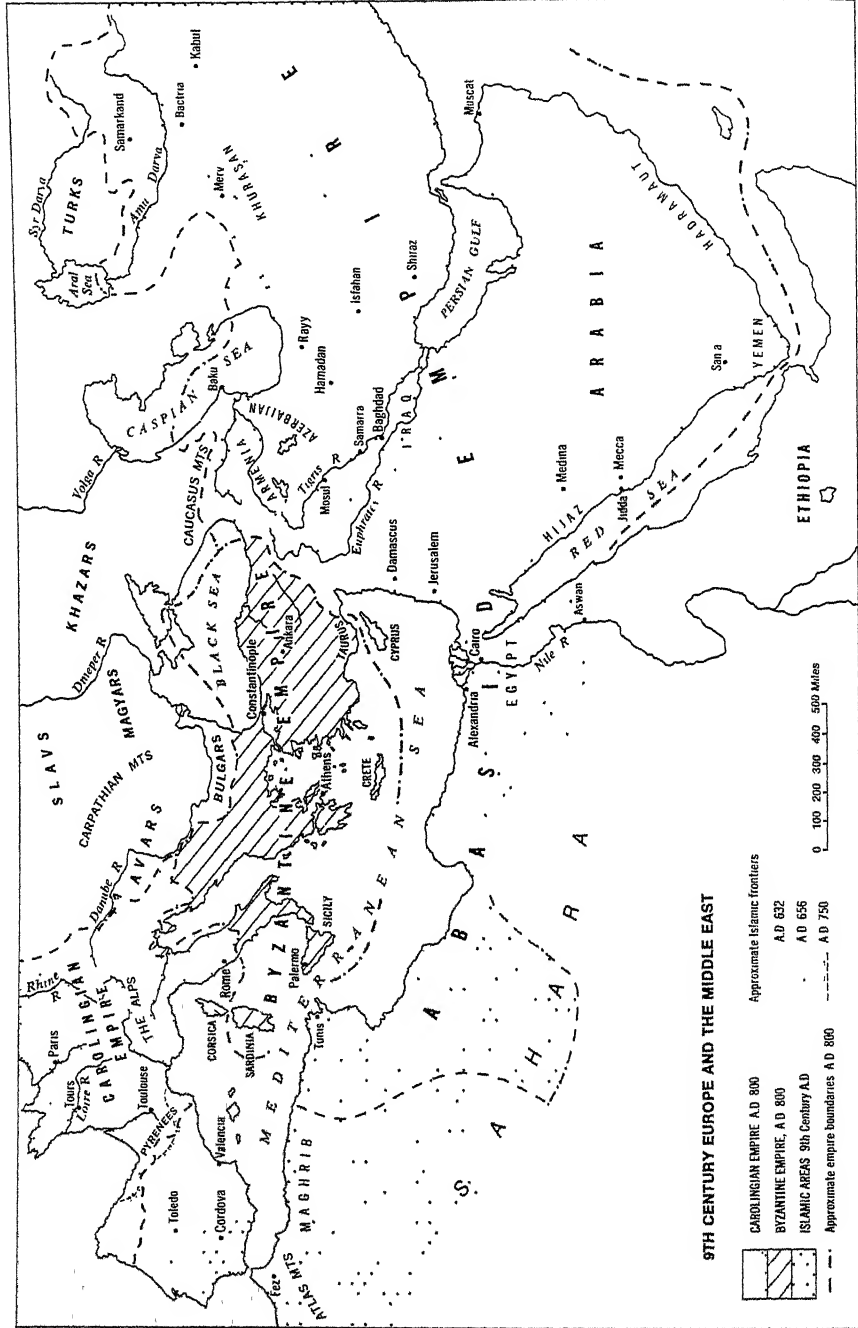
At first, few answered the Call, and those who did were of humble

position Muhammad's few influential supporters, in addition to his wife, were his powerful friends Abu Bakr and Umar, and his sons-in-law Uthman and Ali, who succeeded him as the four "rightly guided" caliphs. Apart from this intimate circle, few were interested in his message of reform. However, as Muhammad became more confident in the importance of his mission he openly attacked the prevailing paganism and its leaders. Naturally this antagonized the powerful merchants who controlled Meccan society; they feared that his reforms would deprive Mecca of its unique and profitable position as a center of both pilgrimage and trade. Their opposition gradually turned to persecution, and some of his followers fled to Coptic Christian Abyssinia where they found asylum under the ruling Negus. The support of his powerful relatives enabled Muhammad to maintain a foothold in Mecca, but he experienced one setback after another. First his wife died, then the sympathetic patriarch of his clan, whose successor was hostile to him. Muhammad's lack of success in Mecca, coupled with his abortive attempt to spread his message in Ta'if, led him to search for a new, more promising horizon. He found it at Yathrib (or Medina), a city 250 miles northeast of Mecca that had originally been settled by Jewish tribes.

Medina was a sophisticated city; it attracted many pagan Arabs who eventually outnumbered its Jewish founders. It had no stable government but was constantly torn by feuds between the rival Arab tribes of the Aus and Khazraj, with the Jews often controlling the balance of power. After prolonged negotiations Muhammad finally agreed to his famous *Hijra* (migration) to Medina in 622, a date which marks the beginning of the Islamic calendar. The Medinese saw in him a man of power, discipline, and spirit who could serve as an arbitrator and conciliator rather than a religious leader. Unlike the Meccans, they had few strong religious convictions. Muhammad had some followers in Mecca, but the majority played a waiting game. They would accept the religious aspect of Islam provided it satisfied their political and economic needs.

This move of Muhammad and his followers to Medina proved to be a pivotal one for the whole development of Islam. Once in Medina, Muhammad's revelations changed in character; they became less prophetic and religious and more regulatory and secular. Islam, the religion and church, became a community and a state, with Muhammad as the lawgiver, the supreme judge, the commander in chief, and the ruler.

Once Islamic power was thus centralized, Muhammad concentrated on the conquest of his native city, Mecca. Here, his abilities as a leader came to the fore. His forces brilliantly defeated the Meccans in the Battle of Badr (624), and gained control of the vital caravan routes to the north. Badr was Islam's first ordeal by battle, and its cause was greatly strength-



ened by the overwhelming triumph. The victory was considered prophetic; the Meccan infidels had been defeated by Allah himself in the person of Muhammad and his followers. In 630, Muhammad entered Mecca as a conqueror—the victory achieved more through negotiation than force. Thus Muhammad's success was complete. The Kaaba and other holy places were now in Islamic hands and purified of paganism. Religious faith replaced old tribal blood ties. Opposition was practically wiped out. By 632, when Muhammad died, almost the whole of the Arabian Peninsula had embraced Islam.

Muhammad's sudden death threatened the dissolution of the community he had struggled to create. First there was the problem of selecting his successor, or caliph. This task threatened to disrupt political and religious unity and precipitated some of the bloodiest battles in Islam. Muhammad had left no heir or clearly designated successor; in fact he had undermined the traditional tribal system of government by taking temporal as well as spiritual power into his own hands. Since he had proclaimed himself the last of the Prophets and said that his unique mission would terminate with his death, there was no need for a spiritual successor, but someone had to fill his role as head of state, commander in chief, lawgiver, and chief justice. During the confusion that followed his death, several rival parties arose, each claiming priority in the appointment of a caliph.

The original Meccan converts, those who had emigrated with him to Medina, based their claim on belonging to the Prophet's tribe of Quraysh and being the first to embrace Islam. His Medinese supporters, on the other hand, claimed priority because they had supported him following the Hijra. Both groups, comprising the most influential among the Companions of the Prophet, leaned toward the traditional tribal method of selecting a new chief from among the best qualified of their number.

A third group, the legitimists, advocating the idea of a divine designation as opposed to the traditional elective principle, supported Ali, a paternal cousin of Muhammad and the husband of his only surviving daughter. Lastly, there were the influential Umayyads; the aristocrats of Mecca although the most recent converts to Islam, they claimed that their traditional position of leadership, based on power and position, entitled them to name the caliph.

An open breach between these diverse elements was avoided by the swift action of a small group of senior Companions who nominated Abu Bakr as Muhammad's successor. Abu Bakr, an unprepossessing, but kindly man, slightly stooped by his sixty years, was revered for his gentleness, humility, and piety. His selection seemed most appropriate, for he had been chosen by the dying Prophet to lead the faithful in prayer.

Muhammad's death created other problems. It acted as a signal for revolt to many of the outlying tribes in central and eastern Arabia whose conversion to Islam had been at best lukewarm. The disciplined yoke of Islam threatened their nomadic independence, and they were grateful for the opportunity to throw it off.

Abu Bakr's awesome task was not only to be an effective religious leader, but also to solidify the shaky unity of the Islamic community. He was remarkably successful. In his short reign of two years, this meek man consolidated the diverse components of Islam and launched the Arabs on their path of conquest. Before his death in 634, Syria, Iraq, the southern provinces of Persia, and the Byzantine empire had all fallen to the Arab conquerors.

To avoid difficulties, Abu Bakr had wisely appointed Umar to succeed him, and the nomination was unanimously accepted. The reign of Umar (634–644) saw the further expansion of the Arab empire. What began as typical Arab raids for booty into Iraq and Syria developed into campaigns of permanent conquest. The small Arab detachments, really mere raiding parties, were led by able commanders (Khalid ibn al-Walid being one of the best known) and struck with lightning swiftness deep into the surrounding countries. They met little effective resistance. One battle after another was won by the seemingly unconquerable Arab armies, brilliantly using the desert as their ally. In the north the Arabs entered Damascus in 635. Then after the decisive battle of Yarmuk (636) the Byzantine emperor Heraclius abandoned Syria. Jerusalem fell in 637. In the east the Arabs won even more spectacular victories against the Persian empire. After the battle of Qadisiya (637), they conquered the whole of Iraq. The battles at Niha-wand (641) and Isfahan (643) finally broke Persian power, and the empire fell into Arab hands. In Egypt the pattern was the same. an Arab army under Amr ibn al-Ass struck in 639. By 642 all of Egypt was under Arab domination.

Thus in a single decade a host of highly organized, sophisticated, and settled societies found themselves conquered by migratory Arab tribesmen. The Persian empire which had existed for centuries was no more, and mighty Byzantium was forced back to the Taurus Mountains in Asia Minor.

What contributed to these spectacular Arab conquests? The inspiration of Islam was of primary importance: it provided the Arabs, for the first time, with a cohesive centralizing force and the dramatic reality of a new and vital religion. The Muslims believed that divine intercession enabled them to scatter the armies of the infidels. The wars of conquests, moreover, provided opportunities for heroism and booty which the Arabs traditionally relished, and which they now pursued in the name of Islam, with missionary zeal. What had begun as a triumph of force soon became a religious

and spiritual crusade—a holy war (jihad). Everywhere the Islamic conquerors gained converts as well as territory.

For the conquered peoples, the task of shifting from old to new rulers was not difficult. Most of them had long been alienated by cruel and corrupt Persian and Byzantine bureaucratic administrations. Moreover, in Egypt and Syria the Christian population was strongly opposed to the centralizing and Hellenizing tendencies of the Byzantine bureaucracy and the Orthodox Church. Umar's organizational abilities also contributed greatly to the Arabs' success. He regularized the legal position of the millions of non-Muslim subjects in his domain and set up an efficient administrative system for the empire. Muhammad had established the precedent of "tolerance" for the "People of the Book," the Jewish and Christian communities in the northern Hijaz. Umar left these communities undisturbed except for the payment of an annual tribute in the form of poll tax (jizya); indeed, he extended the principle of toleration to cover not only all Christians and Jews in the empire, but also the Zoroastrians of Persia. Non-Muslim groups formed their own self-administered communities, lived under their own civil codes, and were governed by their own religious leaders. This system prevailed throughout Islam until the end of the Ottoman period and still exists in a restricted way in parts of the Middle East that have not yet been thoroughly secularized. European Christians claimed that the Muslims gave unbelievers, mainly Christian and Jews, the choice of conversion to Islam or death by the sword, but this was not the case. From a practical point of view, mass conversions to Islam would have meant abandoning the jizya, a considerable source of revenue.

The Muslim conquerors, however, sought to maintain their identity as a separate ruling class. Overall authority in the conquered provinces was established by the appointment of military commanders as governors. Arab garrisons maintained order throughout the empire. Individual Arabs in the newly won territories were forbidden to acquire land outside Arabia proper and were discouraged from mixing with the local populace. Yet while the Arabs held the ultimate power, they wisely left civil control in the hands of their non-Muslim subjects—the Hellenized Christians and Persians experienced in local government.

Umar, whose piety, sense of justice, and puritanical simplicity are proverbial, was responsible for laying the foundations of the empire. In 644 he was assassinated by a discontented Persian slave as he was praying in a mosque in Medina. Uthman, a son-in-law of Muhammad, and a member of the influential Umayyad family of the Meccan tribe of Quraysh, was then elected caliph. Although noted for his mild manner, piety, and closeness to the Prophet, Uthman turned out to be a somewhat irresolute ruler and was accused of appointing his kinsmen to leading positions in the

empire. Some, however, were able generals and governors who carried the banner of Islam north into Asia Minor and Byzantium, and on the eastern front, into Bactria, Kabul, and Ghazni.

The problem of Islamic society at this time was the impact of the Empire upon it. The earliest Muslims were now wealthy notables. A second urban generation was in the making, raised amid the amusements and the luxuries of Alexandria, Damascus, Ctesiphon, and the camp cities of Basra and Kufa. Also, politics, power, and prestige had become ends in themselves, and Uthman was too weak to halt the trend. The legitimists in Kufa, being pietists and theocrats, raised the banner of revolt first. Then in 656, a party of regicides from the army in Egypt came to Medina to present Uthman with grievances concerning his misrule. Uthman, though conciliatory on the surface, was basically adamant. A long siege of his quarters ensued, in which attempts to persuade him to abdicate were made. Upon discovering that Uthman was stalling only to allow the Syrian troops he had secretly sought from Mu'awiya, the Umayyad governor of Syria, to arrive in Medina to defend him, the regicides stormed his palace. They murdered him as he sat, resigned to his fate, reading the Koran. The first blow was dealt by Abdallah, son of Abu Bakr, the first caliph. This murder of a caliph by a fellow Muslim was the first direct challenge to the moral and religious authority of the caliphate as a bond of unity in Islam.

Ali was immediately elected as Uthman's successor. An esteemed and pious Muslim, a tragic-noble hero, Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Muhammad and his male next of kin, had many virtues as warrior, counselor, and friend. But he lacked the talents necessary to govern a divided and restive state, being both indecisive and inflexible, as well as lacking in energy and foresight.

Opposition to Ali began in Mecca headed by Aisha, the widow of the Prophet, who hated him, and by Talha and Zubair, who had been the Prophet's Companions, and who had their own eyes on the caliphate. They had previously been enemies of Uthman and had formed the real centers of opposition to him in Medina even prior to the advent of the Egyptian regicides. Now, with complete disregard of their previous role in the events leading to the murder, they defiantly withdrew to Mecca, withheld their recognition of Ali, and demanded the punishment of the guilty. Ali bore no direct responsibility for the crime, but the opposition insisted that by failing to use his prestige and standing more effectively to protect Uthman, and by failing to punish the regicides after his accession, he had implicated himself in the murder. Soon afterward, a pro-Uthman party developed around the opposition, crying for war and vengeance. After gathering their forces in Mecca, Aisha, Talha, and Zubair moved to Basra in search of local support.

In October, 656, Ali moved against them and left Medina at the head of his army—never to return there again. And from that day to the present, Medina ceased to be the capital of the Islamic empire. The encounter which followed became known as the “Battle of the Camel” after the camel Aisha rode as she urged her supporters to fight on. This first battle of Muslim against Muslim ended in victory for Ali, but not before many illustrious Companions including Talha and Zubair had lost their lives. Aisha, “the Mother of the Faithful,” was captured but was permitted to return to Medina, where she lived in obscurity the rest of her life.

Ali, realizing his unpopularity in Basra, made nearby Kufa his capital. His position as caliph appeared secure, but in reality his authority was constantly being challenged, both by tribal insubordination and by conflicting councils of pietists and theocrats in his own camp.

As for the rest of the empire, Ali was generally recognized as the new caliph. The new governors he had appointed were accepted everywhere but in Syria, where Mu'awiya, the able Umayyad governor, forcibly refused to resign. Mu'awiya withheld his fealty and accused Ali of condoning the regicides. Ali led an army and met the Syrian forces at Siffin by the Euphrates in 657. When the battle went against them, the Syrians dramatically raised copies of the Koran on the point of their lances and appealed for arbitration. The arbitration which followed in 659 was unsuccessful, for it ended in a stalemate—Mu'awiya refusing to recognize Ali as caliph, and Ali neither abdicating nor accepting Mu'awiya as governor of Syria. But the arbitration was, in effect, a moral victory for Mu'awiya, reducing Ali's status as sole caliph to that of a pretender. Moreover, the arbitration brought forth other difficulties for Ali. After the “Battle of the Camel,” where many Meccan and Medinese supporters had perished, Ali was left at the mercy of his soldiers—the anarchic and undisciplined nomadic Arabs. An important group among them, known as the Kharijites (seceders), revolted in protest against his willingness to arbitrate. The Kharijites, the oldest religious sect of Islam, were subdued by Ali in 659, but they continued to reappear as puritanical, militant movements throughout the later history of Islam.

Ali, weakened by the Kharijite revolt and declining morale among his supporters, was assassinated in 661 in Kufa by a Kharijite. Hasan, his eldest son, was proclaimed caliph in Kufa while Mu'awiya was recognized in Damascus. A few months later, Hasan reached an agreement with Mu'awiya. He retired on a royal pension to the pleasures of his harem in Medina, and Mu'awiya was then proclaimed the sole caliph of the empire at Jerusalem in 661, with Damascus as his capital. As the center of state shifted from Medina, to Kufa, to Damascus, and the leadership of the community changed from the Companions of the Prophet to the Umayyads, a new era was born.

For Further Reading

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23 The Disruption and Decline of the Arab Empire

Mu'awiya's problem during his nineteen-year reign was to reunite the demoralized and decentralized empire in order to ensure its continuity and cohesion. His answer was not to rejuvenate the ideal Islamic theocracy of Medina, but to create a centralized Arab kingdom, based on Arab dominance in the empire. In Syria, Mu'awiya ruled as an Arab sheik, the first among equals, his authority as caliph being more on a moral than a religious basis, depending on the consent and loyalty of the dominant Arab element in the empire. Arab participation in government was made effective through two loosely organized consultative bodies of notables, the *shūrā*, the council of sheiks with important executive powers, and the *wufūd*, representing the tribes. Mu'awiya rarely resorted to force; skillfully managing the empire on a purely personal basis, he relied on his power of persuasion to "make friends and influence people."

Elsewhere Mu'awiya ruled through energetic, capable, and forceful provincial governors such as Ziyad, the governor of Iraq, who maintained strong discipline over that turbulent and rebellious province. But while Mu'awiya himself ruled as an Arab sheik, his successors became increasingly autocratic, relying on the Syrian army to control the empire. Mu'awiya also established a tradition of excellence in administration, more Byzantine than Arab in character. The governing procedures of the East Roman Empire current in Syria were followed, and the old administrative system, together with its local Christian personnel, was employed. The troublesome problem of the succession, which had been decided in the past either by controversial election or by civil war, was regulated by Mu'awiya five years before his death. Simple hereditary succession was too alien to the Arab mind to be readily acceptable unmodified, so Mu'awiya, with

- 680 Death of Mu'awiya; succession of his son, Yazid, massacre of Husayn and Alids at Karbala
- 685–687 Shi'ite revolt in Iraq; beginning of Shi'ite extremism
- 710–711 Muslims invade Spain and the Indus Valley
- 717 Initiation of internal reforms by Umar II
- 732 Muslim forces halted near Poitiers by Charles Martel
- 750 Abbas defeats Marwan II; fall of the Umayyads; accession of the Abbasids
- 754 Death of Abbas, succession of Mansur
- 756 The Umayyad Abd al-Rahman founds the independent Emirate of Cordova
- 762–763 Mansur founds Baghdad as the new capital
- 786 Accession of Harun al-Rashid; Abbasid courtly life at its best
- 788 Morocco becomes independent under the Idrisid dynasty
- 799–800 Independent Aghlabid dynasty in Tunisia
- 803 Harun deposes the Barmecids, the family of Abbasid viziers
- 809–813 Civil war between Amin and Ma'mun
- 813–833 Reign of Ma'mun
- 825 Aghlabids start conquest of Sicily
- 833–842 Reign of Mu'tasim; beginning of domination by Turkish bodyguards
- 865–905 The Tulunid dynasty in Egypt and Syria
- 871 Rise of the Saffarids in Persia
- 892 Baghdad again becomes the capital
- 890–906 Appearance of the Carmathians in Iraq and Syria
- 910 Establishment of the Shi'ite Fatimid caliphate in North Africa
- 929 Abd al-Rahman III, emir of Cordova, adopts title of caliph
- 932 Shi'ite Buwaihid dynasty founded in Persia
- 935–969 Ikhshidis rule Egypt
- 945 The Buwaihids occupy Baghdad and control the Abbasid caliph

- 969 Fatimids conquer Egypt and build Cairo, as the capital
- 970 Seljuk Turks enter Persia
- 1030 Breakup of the Umayyad caliphate of Spain into small kingdoms
- 1055 Seljuks seize control of Baghdad
- 1061 Normans initiate their conquest of Sicily
- 1070–1080 Seljuks capture Syria and Palestine
- 1071 Battle of Manzikert; Seljuks capture Asia Minor from the Byzantines
- 1085 Christians seize Toledo and begin reconquest of Spain
- 1096 Crusaders arrive at Constantinople and advance in the Near East
- 1099 Crusaders capture Jerusalem
- 1127 Zangi, a Seljuk officer, captures Mosul, beginning of Muslim reaction against Crusaders
- 1171 Saladin overthrows Fatimids, reestablishes orthodoxy, and founds Ayyubid dynasty in Syria and Egypt
- 1187 Saladin defeats Crusaders at Hittin and captures Jerusalem
- 1221 Mongols ravage Persia
- 1236 Christians take Cordova
- 1250–1260 Rise of the Mamluk sultanate in Egypt and Syria
- 1258 Mongols under Hulagu Khan capture Baghdad, ending the Abbasid caliphate
- 1260 Mamluks stop the Mongols in Palestine
- 1379–1401 Tamerlane ravages Persia, Iraq, and Syria
- 1453 The Ottoman Turks capture Constantinople from the Byzantines
- 1492 Christians capture Granada; Ferdinand and Isabella expel Muslims and Jews
- 1498 Vasco da Gama discovers the route to India around the Cape of Good Hope
- 1517 Ottomans destroy the Mamluks and conquer Syria and Egypt
- 1639 Ottomans seize Iraq from Persia

characteristic diplomacy, found a compromise. He made succession hereditary but subject to the consent of the tribal parliamentary system he had previously devised. Together with the *shūrā* of Damascus he nominated Yazid, his son, and the nomination was confirmed by the *wufūd* speaking for the various tribes. The compromise, though declared a heretical innovation by the Muslim aristocracy in Medina, tended to make the position of caliph hereditary, and overtly established the Umayyad empire which lasted until 750.

The Umayyads produced able rulers who departed from the path set up by their pious predecessors. They emphasized the political and economic aspects of government and ruled more like kings than religious leaders. Historians writing during the succeeding dynasties depicted them as pleasure-loving, worldly usurpers who, except for Umar II (717–720), were not fit to be called caliphs. It is true that most of the Umayyads relegated religion to a secondary place and in their private lives enjoyed the material benefits of their empire. Nevertheless, despite their worldliness, they always posed as the true champions of Islam. Military expansion was energetically resumed and conquests were carried forward into new lands. Within a hundred years the Islamic empire reached its geographic limits. In the East, they conquered Transoxania, Baluchistan, and Sind, and Muslim rule became permanent along the Indus. In the West, they swept over North Africa, and crossed the Straits of Gibraltar into Spain, where an Arab-Berber (Moorish) culture developed over eight centuries, leaving a lasting mark on both Spain and Islam. The wave of conquest in the West carried into the lands of the Franks, but was checked by Charles Martel, at the Battle of Tours (732), only a hundred miles from Paris. In Asia Minor Arab armies conducted repeated campaigns against the Byzantine empire. In one assault, Arab soldiers reached Chalcedon, across the Bosphorus from Constantinople. In another, during the reign of Suleiman (715–717), Arab armies laid siege to the city for fourteen months. But the fortifications of the capital proved impenetrable. Only seven centuries later, with the aid of gunpowder, were the Muslims under the Ottoman Turks able to capture the city.

While vastly increasing the territory of the empire, this second era of expansion caused acute economic and fiscal problems. The treasury depended on the state's share of the booty, the poll tax and a land tax (*kharaj*). The Arabs were in a more advantageous position. They paid no taxes (except for a small religious tax, *zakāt*, to support the needy), and were in fact enrolled in the imperial registry (*dīwān*), each receiving a regular payment from the state treasury. Umayyad fiscal difficulties started when their subjects adopted Islam in increasing numbers and stopped paying taxes. To treat all the faithful equally, Umar II (717–720) freed all

Muslims, irrespective of origin, from the poll and land tax. This, together with the loss of booty from conquests, upset the fiscal system. The disastrous effects on the treasury forced the caliph Hisham (724–743) to stress that: “Although poll taxes fell off upon conversion to Islam, land taxes did not.” This measure later became the model for taxation policy in Islam. It was opposed by non-Arabs, who considered it unfair to non-Muslim landowners. Discontent with the land tax led to widespread alienation, even active opposition.

As rulers and subjects coalesced to form a civilization, four social classes emerged. At the top were the ruling Arabs, who lived in garrison cities. Beneath them were the non-Arab Muslims, whose conversion to Islam was so rapid that by the eighth century they far outnumbered their rulers. Although better educated, they were rarely accepted socially and had to attach themselves to an Arab family or tribe as clients (*mawālī*). In the West, the *mawālī* became Arabicized. But in the East the Arabs were ultimately absorbed by their subjects, and while Islam remained the dominant religion, Iranian, Turkish, Berber, and Indian characteristics prevailed. The non-Muslim subjects, “the People of the Book” (*dummīs*)—Christians, Jews, and later, Zoroastrians, pagan Berbers, Hindus, and others—were classified as second-class subjects. They enjoyed freedom of worship and lived according to their own laws, with limited rights in civil matters. At the bottom of the social ladder were the slaves, Greeks, Turks, Armenians, Kurds, Spaniards, Berbers, and Negroes. Islam, while declaring “manumission as pleasing in the sight of God,” accepted slavery. This institution left its mark on Islamic society more than in the West—economically, through the profitable slave trade, socially through the institution of concubinage and the harem, and politically as individual slaves gained power as favorites, bodyguards, and rulers.

The Umayyads were responsible for the Arabization of the state and the development of a distinctive Arab culture. Trained Arab government personnel were lacking in the early period, so the Umayyads relied on local talent. These kept records in Greek or Persian. As the Islamic state attained maturity, significant reforms were carried out to nationalize it. As qualified Arabs became available, they replaced the former Greek and Persian officials. By the end of the Umayyad period, government records were being kept in Arabic, and Arabic had become the official language of the empire. When the Umayyads rose to power, Byzantine and Sassanid currency were in wide circulation. The Umayyads adopted this currency as media of exchange, sometimes after stamping the old coins with a Koranic inscription. But Abd al-Malik (685–705) introduced Arab Muslim coins with the same value as the old.

Anxious to maintain their dominance in the empire, and to preserve their ancient heritage, the Arabs remained proud of their past, their lan-

guage and lineage. But during the Umayyad period, they became exposed to the influences of more sophisticated civilizations. And despite the political instability of mid- and late-Umayyad times, the beginning of a great intellectual awakening, which came into full bloom in the Abbasid period, was in the making.

Internal weakness and dissension, sharpened by the economic and social injustices perpetrated under their rule, finally led to the downfall of the Umayyads. Large groups among the *mawālī* and Arabs, disenchanted with Umayyad policies and jealous of Umayyad dominance, joined anti-Umayyad parties, such as the puritanical, militant Kharijites, who flourished in Iraq, Iran, and Khurasan, and the Shi'ites, formerly the legitimists, who condemned the Umayyads as usurpers and considered Alī and his descendants as the only legitimate heirs to the caliphate.

The Shi'ite opposition to the Umayyads started when Alī was murdered and his younger son, Husayn, became the head of the Alid house. While Mu'awiya reigned, Husayn made no claims to the caliphate. But when Mu'awiya died (680), he set out for Kufa at the head of a small band of supporters, primarily from the families of Companions, in expectation of local support for his bid to the caliphate. On the way, he was surrounded at Karbala by troops of Mu'awiya's son Yazid, who had been proclaimed caliph in Damascus. When Husayn refused to return to Medina, he was massacred together with his followers and his head sent to Yazid in Damascus. Although the slaying of the Prophet's grandson passed unnoticed at the time, it gained significance later as the Shi'ite movement crystallized and Muslims became divided along religious and theological lines into two major camps, Sunnites (orthodox) and Shi'ites. To Shi'ites, the massacre symbolized the sufferings and maltreatment they endured at the hands of the orthodox majority. As a result, Karbala has become to them a most holy place, and the date of Husayn's death a day of mourning. Husayn's martyrdom and Umayyad suppression of his support in Kufa, Medina, and Mecca weakened Alid opposition. But the resentment harbored against the Umayyads remained.

Another factor contributing to the downfall of the Umayyads was the tribal wars among the nomadic Arabs, whose spirit of independence and resentment of any form of centralizing authority had not diminished. But while in pre-Islamic times they fought among themselves in small isolated units, under the Umayyads they organized into two large feuding factions. One main division, the South Arabian party, had moved northward from Yemen about two centuries before Islam after the breaking of the Ma'rib dam and the ensuing disintegration of economic and political life in southern Arabia. They had settled in the area east of the Jordan River and the Dead Sea, claiming ancestry from Qahtan (Joktan of the Book of Genesis). The rival North Arabian party, which moved northward from the

central and northern parts of the Arabian Peninsula, claiming ancestry from Adnan (Ishmael), was much more nomadic in character. Rivalry between the two parties persisted throughout Islamic history, reaching its height under the Umayyads, when it affected every aspect of political life, especially in Syria.

Finally, in 750, the rule of the Umayyads was supplanted by that of the Abbasids. The center of the empire shifted eastward from Syria to Iraq, from Damascus to Baghdad. To their restive contemporaries, the Abbasids must have represented a new revolutionary force. Claiming descent from Abbas, an uncle of the Prophet, and posing as the true champions of Islam in the tradition of the "rightly guided" caliphs, the Abbasids had conducted an intensive propaganda campaign against the Umayyads, their monopolization of power, their haughty manner, and their worldly extravagances. The fact that the campaign focused on turbulent Iraq and Persia was no mere accident. Persia, especially, because of its remoteness, its strong Shi'ite sentiment, and the awareness, rather certitude, of its populace of their cultural superiority over the conquering Arabs became an easy target for Abbasid propaganda. The black Abbasid banner of revolt that became the emblem of the new dynasty was raised in 747. In 749, Abbas, the founder of the new dynasty, was proclaimed caliph. Marwan II, the last of the Umayyads, still reigned in Syria, but the following year, his army was routed. The systematic liquidation of the Umayyad clan followed.

The movement which had brought the Abbasids to power was based on a widespread revulsion against the impiety of the Umayyads. This impiety affected the whole organization of society, material and moral. The new dynasty radically changed the existing state of things. First came the destruction of the political unity of the Islamic state under one caliph. The one important Umayyad who escaped the wrath of the Abbasids, Abd al-Rahman, fled to Spain and founded a new Islamic state. He and his successors challenged the authority of the Abbasids for three centuries, claiming for themselves the title of caliph. This caliphal dualism, which became a salient feature of Islamic political history, was a departure from the pattern previously established. It was the beginning of a long and dangerous process of political and territorial fragmentation. By the tenth century, as Abbasid control of the state waned, the established pattern lost ground to such an extent that even illustrious political theorists, such as Mawardi (d. 1058), were unable to bridge the gap between theory and practice. It was not until much later, long after the fall of the Abbasids and the shifting and division of the ruling power, that Islamic political thinking came to grips with the facts. Ibn Taymiyya (d. 1328), was realistic enough to recognize that the traditional caliphate was gone, once and for all. By insisting that any state in the empire administered by and in accordance with the Divine Law was Islamic, regardless of whether or not it was ruled

by a caliph, he legitimized the political and territorial disunity which had become the dominant rule in practice.

Other aspects of caliphal unity were also changed fundamentally. The immediate caliphal family, whose composition reflected the social and political tolerance prevalent at the time, underwent a gradual evolution. The Abbasids, like the Umayyads, regarded the caliphal family as superior to all others, but with a difference—they had no scruples against marrying non-Arabs. In fact nearly all the Abbasids were the sons of non-Arab slaves. Ethnic purity counted for little and had no relevance in the strict Arab or Umayyad sense. This caused another basic change: the caliph no longer depended on the support of the Arab ruling caste. He became a personal autocrat, surrounded by pomp, imposing his will through a skilled bureaucracy and a professional army, very much in the Byzantine and Sassanid style.

Moreover, the problem that the *mawālī* posed for the previous regime dissipated as they were allowed to assimilate. In the name of equality, the new converts aspired to a position corresponding to the growing effective influence they exercised. The outspoken element among them was the Persians. As the principal supporters of the new regime, they were the chief beneficiaries of the change, but other groups also won equal status with the Arabs. By the eighth century the term *mawālī* had ceased to exist. This did not mean that regional antagonism had come to an end, but rather that regionalism was acquiring a new shape. An exclusive Arab society was evolving into an international society wherein all Muslims were equal, irrespective of national or racial origin. Hostility toward the Arabs continued, but in a modified fashion. For now it stemmed from a sense of equality, a healthy competitive spirit, in a society open for all. It expressed national pride, the superiority of the Persians, for instance, over the Arabs.

There was a certain amount of Persian influence in the capital early in the Abbasid period, and it became considerable by the beginning of the ninth century. Soon afterward, Abbasid control in Persia began to disintegrate. Ex-caliphal officials, generals, and scions of local noble families founded their own petty dynasties in different parts of Persia and Central Asia. Some of these little states either coexisted with or were supplanted by the more considerable states of the Samanids (874–999) of eastern Persia and Turkestan and the Buwaihids (932–1035) of western Persia. Abbasid control over the empire was further undermined when, in 945, a branch of the Buwaihid dynasty captured most of Iraq, moved into the capital city of Baghdad, and deprived the caliph of all but his prestige. The caliph's power was eroded not only in the Persian East but also in the West. In Syria, Arabia, Egypt, even in Iraq itself, a succession of short-lived, virtually independent dynasties emerged, such as the Hamdanids (929–1003) of Aleppo, and the Marwanids (990–1096). In Egypt and most of Syria,

where Abbasid control had never been popular, caliphal officials asserted their power and established two independent dynasties—the Tulunids (865–905) and the Ikhshidis (935–969). They were succeeded by the Fatimids, who moved into Egypt from Tunisia in 969 and founded Cairo, which became the capital of a powerful and prosperous state noted for cultural and artistic achievements and for extensive trade relations with Europe. Even in remote Arabia, the caliph's authority was undermined. The most serious challenge was posed by Carmathian sectarians, a heretical Shi'ite sect that controlled Mecca, until the Fatimids destroyed it and brought the Hijaz with the holy cities of Mecca and Medina under their control.

Abbasid power was further weakened by the rise of a succession of theocratic city-dynasties, such as the Sharifs of Mecca, and the heretical Shi'ite Ibadis in Oman. Before the rise of the Fatimids, the Aghlabids (801–909) had succeeded in establishing themselves in North Africa, as well as in gaining a firm foothold in Sicily and parts of southern Italy. Farther west, Morocco, another independent Shi'ite dynasty, the Idrisids, came to power. In Spain, the westernmost portion of the empire, the process of disintegration set in much earlier when in 756 the Umayyad Abd al-Rahman, after escaping the persecution of the Abbasids, was recognized as ruler by both Arab and Berber. His Umayyad successors went a step further by having themselves recognized as independent caliphs. After the collapse of Umayyad power in Spain, although the Islamic element was strengthened by the advent from North Africa of the puritanical Almoravids and Almohads in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the country remained politically independent. During this isolation from the rest of the Islamic world, a period of eight centuries, a remarkable Spanish-Muslim culture evolved that left a lasting imprint on the arts and sciences of both medieval Islam and Christian Europe.

By the end of the tenth century, the great Arab empire of the Abbasids had thus become politically fragmented among several states of varying strength, size, durability, and independence. Both the capital, the wealthy and cultured city of Baghdad, and the caliphate fell under the control of secular, non-Arab rulers. The caliph legitimized the usurpation of his power by a new princely ruler by investing him with the right to rule, in his name, but that was a mere formality designed to close the gap between the ideal caliphate and political practice. He had lost all but his spiritual prerogatives as the head of the Islamic community. However, the rise and fall of these now forgotten medieval Islamic states constitutes an important chapter in the development of Islamic civilization. In spite of their precarious existence, subject to the constant challenge from within and without of new and jealous aspirants, these states, for several centuries, provided large sectors of the empire with governments that were generally formal and orderly

with a strong devotion to Islam and a remarkable appreciation of learning, culture, and the arts.

With the caliphate thus dismembered and weakened, and orthodox Islam challenged by varying interpretations and even heterodoxies, the time was ripe for change. This was provided by the Seljuk Turks, who had entered Persia at the beginning of the eleventh century and wrested control of the whole country from the Ghaznavids of Afghanistan and north India, and from the existing local dynasties.

The Seljuks belong to a linguistically interconnected group of peoples, generally known as Turks, who emerged from the steppes of central Asia as nomadic tribes in the early Middle Ages, over several centuries moved into Persia and western Asia in successive waves, and became converted to Islam. Turks, no doubt, existed in the empire earlier as slaves and bodyguards, but it was with the rise of the Seljuks to power that the Turkish element in the empire gained ascendancy. In 1055, after establishing his control in Persia, the Seljuk Tughril Beg (d. 1063) entered Baghdad, deposed the last Shi'ite Buwaihid, and reestablished Sunnite orthodoxy under the titular leadership of the caliph.

The Seljuk empire stretched over Persia, Kurdistan, and Iraq and lasted until the mid-twelfth century, but it was always loosely united and, in the twelfth century, was split up among smaller but related dynasties ruled by Seljuk princes. Simultaneously, but lasting until the mid-thirteenth century, another succession of Turkish dynasties, founded by former slaves and officers of Seljuk princes, arose in Iraq, Kurdistan, and Persia. Despite the violence characterizing their reign, the Seljuk Turks provided the territories they occupied with relative stability, an orthodox Islamic government, and some able rulers, such as Alp Arslan (1063–1072) and Malik Shah (1072–1092). However, their epoch represents the superiority of Persian over Turkish culture. The Seljuks in almost all fields appreciated the administrative and artistic genius of their Persian subjects and utilized Persian talent and experience in the administration of their empire. The first three Seljuk sultans relied on Persian viziers, such as the able Nizam al-Mulk, and on Persian bureaucracy. Their restoration of Sunnite orthodoxy and their posing as the protectors of the caliphate and as patrons of orthodox Islamic learning and scholarship were welcome changes in those troubled times. But the orthodoxy they reestablished, because of the Shi'ite and Murtazilite challenge, had become reactionary and restrictive. It had an adverse effect on future progressive thought and development in Islam. Seljuk rule also gave impetus to the large-scale westward influx and settlement of other warlike nomadic Turkish tribes from central Asia, whose language and character thus became permanently impressed on large areas of the Middle East, especially Azerbaijan, Kurdistan, and Anatolia.

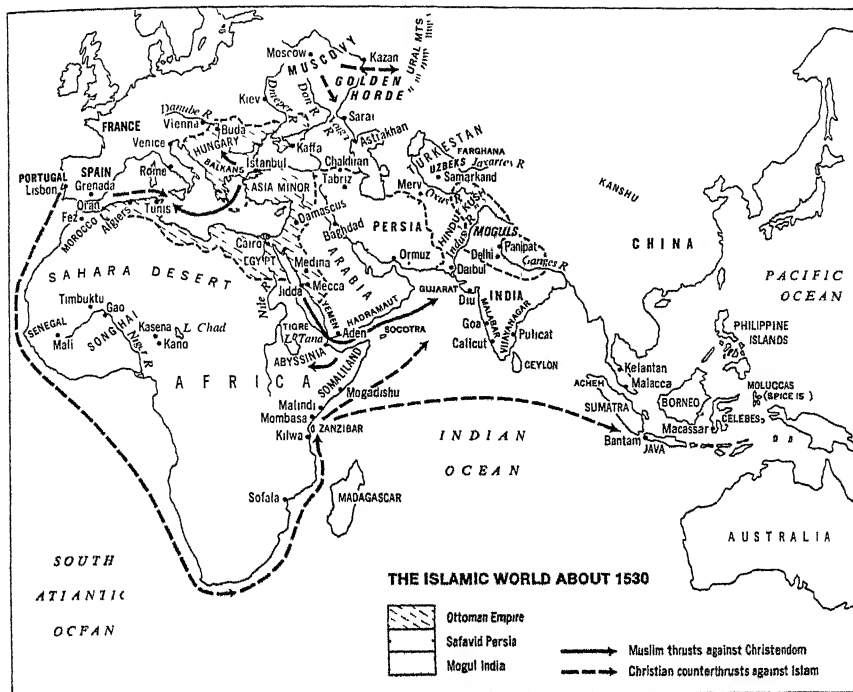
Nowhere was the impact of the Seljuks more decisive than in Anatolia. The border which had separated Islam and Byzantium for more than four centuries was permanently breached, and the Islamic-Byzantine balance of power was altered for all time in favor of Islam. As early as 1050, Tughril Beg had invaded Asia Minor. After defeating the Byzantine forces and capturing the emperor in the decisive battle of Manzikert (1071), the Turks penetrated central and western Asia Minor and established the Seljuk Sultanate of Rum with Nicaea (Iznik), not far from Constantinople, as the capital. Other nomadic Turkish tribes, recently converted to Islam, poured into the area, thus beginning the permanent "Turkification" of Asia Minor.

Meanwhile, two parallel developments appeared. One was the rise of the Ayyubid dynasty in Egypt and Syria as the defender of Sunnite orthodoxy in Islam; the other was the Crusades. The Crusades, with all their noble and not so noble episodes, meant more to the West than to the East. Their effect on contemporary Arab-Muslim society was minimal; except for the ruins of Crusaders' fortifications along the Syrian coast and the memory, still lingering in the Arab-Muslim mind, of Saladin's achievement as the champion of Islam against Christian aggression, nothing remains. Even as a medium for the transmission of Arab-Islamic culture to the West, the Crusades played no more than a secondary role. The main areas of East-West communication were in Sicily and Spain.

Saladin, a Kurdish-born officer of the Zangid dynasty of Syria, rose to power in Egypt in 1169 after two centuries of Shi'ite Fatimid rule. Before him, the main military opposition to the First Crusade (1097-1100) and the Second Crusade (1147-1149) came from the Zangids of Syria. But it was his personal achievement to unite the Islamic opposition under his powerful leadership and effectively check the Crusaders. In 1187 the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem, set up by the first Crusaders in 1099, was reconquered. Saladin died in 1193, but his dynasty, the Ayyubids, continued in Egypt, Syria, and western Arabia until 1250.

At this date an invasion far more devastating and disruptive than the Seljuk incursion of two centuries earlier was in the making—that of the Mongols, who fell upon the empire in successive waves spreading unprecedented havoc and destruction everywhere. One of the last Abbasid caliphs, Nasir (1180-1225) had made an unsuccessful attempt to restore the original powers of his office by instigating one of the shahs of Khawarizm against Seljuk domination in Iraq and Kurdistan. By the early part of the thirteenth century, the shahs of Khawarizm were in control of most of Persia, and in a battle in 1194 they defeated the Seljuks and replaced them as masters of Iraq.

The ascendancy of the Khawarizm shahs, however, was short-lived.



Earlier in the twelfth century, pagan Mongolian tribes moved into central Asia and established an extensive empire under the leadership of the redoubtable Chinggis Khan. By the time he died (1227) Chinggis Khan and his hordes had shaken to their foundations many a state from China to eastern Europe. Parts of Russia and Khawarizm were left in ruins. Transcaucasia and Azerbaijan were likewise overrun, although Baghdad, situated farther south, was spared for the moment. This vast empire lasted for three centuries. Its administration was a curious combination, partly centralized and partly a mélange of federated vassal states united under the supreme ruler, the Great Khan, who resided in remote China.

In 1253 the Mongols rode westward again, this time under the leadership of Hulagu, a grandson of Chinggis Khan, who succeeded to a substantial portion of the empire. Hulagu and his Mongolian hordes swept over Persia, reaching Alamut in the north Persian mountains in 1256, where they put an end to the dreaded and heretical order of the Assassins, whose grand master had conducted a campaign of terrorism in the Middle East. The Mongols then poured into Iraq and, as they drove toward Baghdad, plundered or destroyed everything in their path, including the

elaborate canal system on which much of the agriculture of the land depended. In 1258, after a brief siege, the wealthy and cultured capital of the Abbasids fell to the pagan hordes. Many of the populace were slaughtered and the city was sacked and given over to flames. The sickly Abbasid caliph Musta'in, along with hundreds of his officials, was also slain, and with the passing of the last reigning Abbasid, the caliphate came to an end, except for an insignificant claimant whom the court in Cairo retained on pension for political ends. Hulagu then advanced against the Seljuks and the Atabegs in Asia Minor, and after destroying their power moved on to Syria. Here, for the first time, he was checked. For in Syria, the Mongols came face to face with a new and rising force: the Mamluks, a new dynasty of Turkish and Circassian ex-slaves, bodyguards, and fief-holding officers under the Ayyubids, who had risen to power in Egypt and Syria and seized control in 1250.

But Hulagu had changed the political map of the Middle East. Before his death in 1265, he was the undisputed ruler of an empire that stretched from India to Syria with only formal feudal homage paid to the Great Khan. After his death, Iraq and Persia passed on to his successors, the Il-Khans, who made Tabriz their capital. The Il-Khanid's rule (1265-1335), at first alien and undistinguished, gradually improved as the pagan Mongols embraced Islam and learned to appreciate and put to use Persian administrative and artistic genius. They were succeeded by a series of lesser dynasties, most of which were overrun by the armies of Tamerlane at the close of the fourteenth century.

Tamerlane, a descendant of Chinggis Khan, began his destructive conquests from his base in central Asia. After overrunning Persia and Iraq and sacking Baghdad in 1393, he moved on into Asia Minor and Syria. His extensive empire collapsed shortly after his death in 1405, but two Timurid dynasties arose as successors, one line in Persia lasting for almost a century, and the other in India becoming the Mogul empire.

At the time of Tamerlane's invasion, Asia Minor was under the domination of the Ottoman Turks while Syria and Egypt were under the Mamluks. Mamluk rule, with its two successive dynasties, the Bahri (1250-1390) and the Burji (1382-1517), provided Egypt and most of Syria with an effective government. In 1517, after a reign of over 250 years, Mamluk rule gave way to that of the Ottoman Turks.

For Further Reading

Brockelmann, Carl, *History of the Islamic Peoples*.

Hitti, P. K., *History of the Arabs*.

Lewis, Bernard, *The Arabs in History*.

24 Islamic Civilization

To attempt a summary appraisal of a major civilization that evolved over a period of several centuries in a large and heterogeneous part of the world is no simple task. Although the civilization that flourished during the period of greatness of the Arab and Islamic empires had a relatively uniform character, it was complex and variegated, a product of the interaction of many peoples with widely diverse religious and cultural traditions. The unsophisticated Arab invaders were able to impose not only themselves but also their language and their religion on the more populous and more civilized conquered territories. Naturally, the culture which developed was neither purely Arab nor purely Islamic, it drew heavily upon local sources. But the new culture was not just a mixture; it was a new and original creation whose various elements were fused together into a recognizable system. Nevertheless, in its unique assimilative power, its comparative tolerance, its consciousness of its own superiority and self-sufficiency, and its atomistic view of life and the universe, it was genuinely Arab-Islamic, and Arabic was the chief instrument of culture, Islam the unifying and dominating factor in the system.

The Arab-Muslim conquerors were, like their pre-Islamic predecessors, a primitive people with a nomadic, scarcely transplantable culture, particularly deficient in the material and artistic fields. But they had special gifts and qualities of their own which served them well initially: racial and religious solidarity, devotion to a triumphant faith, expectations of reward—worldly and otherworldly, and an openness to knowledge and development in all areas. But above all, they had a language and a religion to offer to the world.

Arabic, the youngest Semitic tongue, had, in those early times, a highly developed oral, but virtually no written, tradition. Its most sophisticated expression was in the form of poetry vividly depicting the life of the proud, defiant, intractable Bedouin. In a concrete and highly individualistic manner, it described the passions of the Bedouin, his tribulations and joys, the merciless desert environment, the futility of life. But from occasional, amazingly perceptive hints there emerges a vague hope of better things to come. This poetry, because of the purity of its diction and form, its excellent treatment of limited themes, and its elaborate and intricate meter and rhyme, became the poetic model for later Islamic poets.

Since Arabic was the language of the Prophet and the Koran, it became

- A D.
- 500–622 Pre-Islamic poetry flourishes in Arabia
 - 650 Official version of the Koran established in the reign of Uthman
 - 670 Building of the Great Mosque of Qayrawan in Tunisia
 - 691 Building of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem by Abd al-Malik
 - 696 Arab coinage is introduced by Abd al-Malik; Arabic becomes the official administrative language of the empire
 - 751 Arabs learn papermaking from captured Chinese prisoners; use of paper spreads westward in the empire
 - 765 A school of medicine founded in Baghdad
 - 767 Death of Abu Hanifa, founder of Hanafite School of Law
 - 785 Building of the Great Mosque of Cordova by Abd al-Rahman
 - 795 Death of Anas ibn Malik, founder of the Malikite School of Law
 - 813–833 Reign of Ma'mun; translation movement; Arabic science and learning flourishes; espousal of Mu'tazilism as the official theology
 - 815 Death of Abu Nuwas, celebrated poet of Abbasid court
 - 820 Death of Shafi'i, founder of the Shafi'ite School of Law
 - 850 Death of Kindi, first Arab philosopher
 - 855 Death of Ahmad ibn Hanbal, founder of the Hanbalite School of Law
 - 869 Death of Jahiz, literary figure
 - 870 Death of Bukhari, famed for his compendium of Tradition
 - 875 Death of Muslim, famed for his compendium of Tradition
 - 876 Building of Ibn Tulun mosque in Cairo
 - 877 Death of Hunayn ibn Ishaq, most prominent translator of Greek works

- 922 Execution of Hallaj, Sufi mystic, for heresy
- 925 Death of Razi (Rhazes), physician and scientist
- 950 Death of Farabi (Pharabius), philosopher
- 965 Death of Mutanabbi, neoclassical poet
- 970 Mosque-university of al-Azhar built in Cairo by the Fatimids
- 1010 Firdawsi, Persian poet, completes his *Epic of Kings*
- 1030 Death of Biruni, physician, physicist, astronomer, mathematician, geographer, and historian
- 1037 Death of Ibn Sina (Avicenna), physician and philosopher
- 1067 Nizamiyya Madrasa (academy) established by the Seljuk vizier Nizam al-Mulk in Baghdad; Ash'arism established as the orthodox theology
- 1111 Death of Ghazali, mystic and theologian
- 1123 Death of Omar Khayyam, poet and astronomer
- 1198 Death of Ibn Rushd (Averroes), Aristotelian philosopher
- 1229 Death of Yaqut, geographer
- 1273 Death of Jalal al-Din al-Rumi, Persian mystic and poet
- 1325 Ibn Battuta begins his travels
- 1353 Completion of Alhambra in Granada
- 1390 Death of Hafiz, Persian lyric poet
- 1406 Death of Ibn Khaldun, Arab historian

the sole and divine key to knowledge and doctrine. With the Arabization of the empire and the flowering of learning and scholarship, Arabic became the chief instrument of everyday speech, as well as of culture, replacing Aramaic, Coptic, Greek, and Latin. Arabic also exerted an enormous influence on other Muslim languages like Persian and Turkish, these adopted not only the Arabic script and much Arabic vocabulary but also Arab literary tastes and traditions.

Besides their language, the Arabs contributed Islam to the civilization of the Middle East. The religion as it evolved in the Koran and the Traditions of the Prophet had a universal appeal, despite its distinctively Arab orientation and coloring. Islam is a monotheistic faith whose essential core of belief is the unity of Allah, the wholly transcendent God. According to Islam, Muhammad, the Messenger of Allah and the last and the greatest of an ascending series of prophets, is wholly human, having no claim to divinity. While offering attractive concessions and promises to the believer, Islam rigidly stresses a set of fundamental dogmas and practices. It requires on the one hand belief in the uniqueness of God, the truthfulness of the Prophet's Mission, the divine origin of the Koran, a hierarchy of angels, and the Last Day of Judgment. It prescribes, on the other hand, the obligation to profess the faith, perform the five daily prayers, give alms (*zakāt*), fast during the month of Ramadan, and—if possible—make a holy pilgrimage (*hajj*) to Mecca once in a lifetime. To this foundation of dogmas and duties, prohibitions were added against drinking wine, eating pork, usury, gambling, and image representations. Believers were also enjoined by Islam to holy war (*ḡhad*). The new faith also accepted the pre-Islamic institutions of slavery and polygamy, but required greater restraint and more humane treatment. From this simple set of basic dogmas and regulations that claimed universal application and validity, Islam in time developed into an elaborate political, social, intellectual and legal system, with the *Sharī'a*, the divinely revealed law, as its all-pervasive code.

The Arab-Muslim civilization represents one of the great creative achievements of human history. From the ninth century onward, after the initial period of borrowing and absorption, a remarkable and distinct civilization flourished, not only in and around the capital city of Baghdad, but throughout the Middle East, Persia, Central Asia, India, North Africa, Sicily, and Spain. The efflorescence of the civilization was facilitated by the pressure of certain favorable conditions—a rich and diversified cultural heritage, ample wealth and leisure, a common language, a common religion, and the support by Muslim princes and their courts of the arts, learning, and literature.

The artistic contribution of the civilization was immense. In architec-

ture, gracious and orderly cities were built and adorned with mosques, palaces, gardens, fountains, libraries, bridges, and public baths. The structural beauty and meticulous decoration of surviving Islamic monuments display not only the sophistication and versatility of Islamic art and architecture, but also both the eclecticism and the originality of the civilization that produced them. So do Islamic decorative and industrial arts, such as pottery, tilework, metalwork, woodwork, glassware, jewelry, textiles, brocades, carpets, leatherwork, papermaking, bookbinding, and illumination. After a period of imitation Islamic craftsmen evolved new techniques and styles producing exquisite artistic creations in all these forms.

The literary achievement of the civilization was as abundant as it was diversified, reflecting Arab, Persian, Hellenistic, and other cultural and religious backgrounds. It made rich contributions to many fields of science and learning—in literature, religion and law, in music, history, geography, philosophy, medicine, mathematics, and astronomy. The earliest contribution was in prose and poetry. The rhymed prose of the Koran, the first major literary document in Arabic, influenced the early development of the style. Arabic prose excelled in belles-lettres and the essay, and achieved sophistication and grace at the hands of noted men of letters, some of whom were non-Arabs, such as Jahiz (d. 869). Poetry, the most esteemed literary genre among the Arabs, also developed along new lines. Pre-Islamic poetry, which had been transmitted orally, was standardized and written down under the Umayyads, but a new kind of poetry, with new forms and themes, evolved during the Abbasid period as a result of Persian influences, the ease and luxury of life in a metropolis, and the patronage of caliphal or princely courts. The new poetry, however, was short-lived and was superseded by a neoclassical poetry, as seen in the work of the popular Mutanabbi (d. 965).

The intellectual awakening that began under the Umayyads as the Arabs became exposed to more advanced civilizations came into full bloom in the Abbasid period. In Mecca and Medina, certain theologians and pietists rejected Umayyad worldliness. They isolated themselves in these two holy cities to devote themselves to religious study and scholarship. Interest in Islamic religious and legal sciences and learning spread to other important centers in the empire, where religious scholars formed circles in time identified as distinct "legal" and theological schools of thought. Religious, legal, and theological studies were in principle based upon the two main sources of all Islamic knowledge, the Koran and Tradition, a collection of reports of the acts and sayings of the Prophet and his Companions. The Koran, which had been compiled and standardized during the reign of Uthman, was universally accepted as the basic source. But the need to interpret its symbolism and ambiguities and to explain and apply its prescriptions to

new situations gave rise to the development of grammar, lexicography, exegesis, jurisprudence, and scholastic theology. As for the body of Tradition, it was in a state of flux during the first two centuries of the empire. Thus it became necessary to compile and standardize it. This gave rise to another distinctively Islamic science, which ultimately produced six standard compilations of Tradition, the most universally recognized of which are those of Bukhari (d. 870) and Muslim (d. 875).

Jurisprudence was also cultivated. It gave Islam its religio-legal system of the *Shari'a*. The *Shari'a* governed all aspects of life, including belief, ritual, and civil, criminal, constitutional, and international law. It was both a code of law and a pattern of conduct—a political and social ideal with the double purpose of ensuring man's happiness in this world and in the world to come. It defined man's relation both to Allah, and to the community and its Prophet, and (later) to the empire and the reigning caliph. This comprehensive code developed and systematized by the Islamic jurists in accordance with the Koran and Tradition was from the beginning an ideal system. The legal material in the Koran and Tradition was limited. While adequate for the early Muslims of Mecca and Medina, it could not meet the increasing needs of a community expanding both geographically and culturally. As a result lawyers and judges took local custom and legal practices prevalent in the conquered territories, Islamicized them, and incorporated them into the *Shari'a* system. Further, the use of principles such as analogy and the consensus of scholars enabled jurists to expand the prescriptions in the Koran and Tradition to deal with unprecedented cases. The importance which prominent jurists attached to these principles and to Tradition as sources of law gave rise to different schools of legal thought. These finally crystallized around four orthodox rites, the Malikite (after Anas ibn Malik, d. 795), the Hanafite (after Abu Hanifa, d. 767), the Shafi'ite (after Shafi'i, d. 820), and the Hanbalite (after Ahmad ibn Hanbal, d. 855). As the *Shari'a* system achieved its maximum development in the ninth century, the forces of conservatism gradually set in, preventing further innovations. The *Shari'a* became a closed system. The ascendancy of a conservative and restrictive attitude toward the development of the *Shari'a* was in part a reassertion of Islam's original claim that the law emanated from God, the true and only Lawgiver. Even before the *Shari'a* ceased to be in tune with political and social realities, a secular law was being developed alongside it, based on executive decrees and the decisions of secular courts. In modern times the *Shari'a*, as a code of law, has been superseded by secular codes of law patterned on Western ones. This is true of all branches of the law except the limited area of personal status—marriage, divorce, and inheritance.

Important contributions were also made in history, biography, geography, and the social sciences. Under the Umayyads, the writing of history acquired a new importance—that of preserving the distinctly Arab character of the empire from the inroads of the conquered civilizations. It began with biographical literature about the Prophet, but soon developed to include monumental works covering a wide area including universal and local histories, and histories of tribes, dynasties, and institutions. Major advances were also made in the methods of writing history which culminated in the development of the more narrative and interpretative types of histories, best exemplified in the work of Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406), the greatest Arab philosopher of history. Similarly, the study of geography received much attention in Islam. The extent of Islamic conquests, the institution of the holy pilgrimage, and the penetration of Muslim traders into distant lands encouraged the study of geography and resulted in encyclopedic works, such as that of Yaqut (1179–1229).

Islamic religious literature drew heavily on Christian and Jewish sources. Both the Koran and Tradition contain a great deal of material that indicates a strong Talmudic and Apocalyptic influence. The indebtedness of the legal system itself to these sources, along with the Roman-Byzantine legal system, is also obvious. However, Islamic theological literature, which was only initially influenced by Syriac Christianity, together with Islamic philosophy and the sciences, including medicine, mathematics, chemistry, physics, and astronomy, also bear the direct impress of Greek thought. The intellectual awakening which began under the Umayyads and bore fruits under the Abbasids came partly from the translation into Arabic of Greek (as well as Persian, Sanskrit, and Syriac) books and treatises. The translation movement started under the Umayyads. The translators were mainly Syrians, Nestorians, Christians, and Jews. Greek manuscripts were translated either directly from the original or indirectly from Syriac versions. Under the Abbasids, the movement became well organized, reaching its height under the reign of Ma'mun (813–833), who founded a library-academy and sent scholars as far as Constantinople in search of material. The most prominent translator was Hunayn ibn Ishaq (809–877), a Nestorian Christian physician and superintendent of Ma'mun's academy. He and other academicians translated many works, including those of Galen and Hippocrates in medicine and Dioscorides in botany, as well as Plato's *Republic* and Aristotle's *Categories* and *Physics*. Other Syrians, the "pseudo-Sabians" of Harran, were also active in the translation movement. Thabit ibn Qurrah (836–911), the leading translator of this school, and his disciples are credited with the translation of Greek mathematical and astronomical works, including those of Archimedes and Euclid.

The translation movement, which lasted until the end of the ninth

century, was followed by a period of original contributions. In theology, jurisprudence, philology, linguistics, and literature, creativity came earlier than in philosophy and the sciences. Muslim scholars, mostly of Persian origin, adapted their borrowings to their needs and built up their own scientific and philosophical systems. One of the most original thinkers and physicians of medieval times was Razi (Rhazes, 865–925), whose encyclopedic work on medicine was translated into Latin in Sicily as early as 1279 and widely used in Europe as a textbook. Ibn Sina (Avicenna, 980–1037), best known as a philosopher-physician, codified Greco-Arab medical thought. His work was translated into Latin in Spain and soon superseded other medical textbooks. But the Arab interest in medicine was primarily clinical and surgical, rather than theoretical. They also made important contributions in alchemy and botany, which were closely allied to medicine, and in astronomy. Technical terms of Arabic origin in these disciplines abound in Western languages—for example, azimuth, nadir, and zenith in astronomy; alchemy, alcohol, alembic, alkali, antimony, and tutty in chemistry; julep, soda, and syrup in medicine—indications of the permanent mark of Arab culture and its penetration of Europe. The Arabic numerals, together with the vital zero (*sifr*, cypher), were transmitted to Europe via Spain. Modern trigonometry as well as algebra and geometry are in considerable measure Arab creations.

In its initial stage of development, philosophical thought in Islam was controlled and conditioned by religion, and was mainly the product of theological speculation. The introduction of Greek philosophy and logic in the ninth century, however, gave rise to a distinct Islamic philosophy (*falsafa*) which had a far-reaching impact on the rationalistic and theological outlook of Islam. The earliest representative of this new school was the philosopher Kindi (d. 850), who strove, like all the other Islamic thinkers, to harmonize Greek philosophy with Islam. Farabi (Pharabius, d. 950) and Ibn Sina continued Kindi's work. Farabi built a philosophical and political system inspired by Greek and Islamic ideas. The greatest Aristotelian philosopher in Islam was the Spanish Arab Ibn Rushd (Averroes, d. 1198), whose commentaries on the Arabic translation of Aristotle's works were rendered into Hebrew and Latin, giving rise to Averroism, an important school of philosophical thought in medieval Europe.

With the passage of time Islam itself, as a religion and way of life, underwent profound changes affecting its unity. As the empire expanded, Islam became increasingly exposed to Hellenic, Jewish, Christian, Zoroastrian, and animistic influences. Some of these elements were assimilated and became incorporated in the system; others, too alien to Islamize, were generally rejected, but gave rise at times to certain heretical sects. The major schisms in Islam, however, arose earlier, before alien beliefs and

ideas had a noticeable effect on belief and ritual. On the one hand, purely Arab and purely political arguments, such as the right of succession to the caliphate, led to differing religious interpretations that split the Islamic community into two major branches—the Sunnites and the Shi'ites, including such extreme subdivisions as Isma'ilism with its Assassins, Carmathians, Nusayris, Duruzes, and other heterodoxies. The extremism of the latter movements represents the dissatisfaction of certain oppressed elements among the less privileged classes with the existing political, social, and religious order and their attempt to force a change. On the other hand, contact with Greek Christianity in Syria early in the Umayyad period stimulated critical thinking regarding certain established beliefs and doctrines. This gave rise to new religio-philosophical schools of thought, one of the earliest of which was the Qadarite, which preached a doctrine of free will as against the strict predestinarianism of traditional Islam, and its emphasis on the Transcendence and Almightyness of God. The Qadarite doctrine and Islam's initial acceptance of Greek philosophy and Greek logic led to the development of a more rationalistic theology by the Mu'tazilites based on the Unity and Justice of the God-head. For a brief period, during the reign of Ma'mun (813–833), when the rationalist and scientific spirit in Islam was prevalent, the Mu'tazilite doctrine was espoused by the state and made the official theology. The dominance of the Mu'tazilites, however, did not long endure. Their extremism and intolerance triggered a violent reaction among traditionalists which led ultimately to the acceptance in Islam of Ash'arism (after Ash'ari, d. 935). This was a deterministic and authoritarian system of theology, based on the rejection of all causality and the strict adherence to the literal meaning of the Koran. The triumph of this static, formalist theology was a major factor in the decline and the ultimate disappearance of independent speculation and inquiry in Islam.

Finally, Islam witnessed the rise and spread of Sufism, the Islamic counterpart of mysticism, which had far-reaching effects upon Islamic society and its faith. As a reaction against both the intellectualism of the Mu'tazilites and the philosophers and the formalism of traditional orthodoxy, Sufism grew rapidly among both Sunnites and Shi'ites, not as a separate religious sect, but rather as a more meaningful, more personal, approach to piety. From rudimentary beginnings exemplifying the best in Islamic piety, it became increasingly ascetic as it absorbed Christian, Gnostic, Neoplatonic, and Buddhist elements. In the process, it developed a variety of forms, including pantheistic Sufism. The excesses of certain devotees and their pantheistic tendencies, such as the Persian Hallaj (d. 922), who was executed for heresy, resulted in the condemnation of Sufism by orthodoxy. But the yearning for a more personal religion made the

mystic way irresistible to many devout Muslims, including Ghazali (d 1111), the greatest of Muslim theologians. By reconciling the new scholasticism with the intuitive, mystical religion of the Sufis, Ghazali assured for Sufism a permanent position in Islam. By the twelfth century, as Sufism attracted more and more people from all strata of Islamic society, numerous Sufi orders each with its own monasteries, ritual, and doctrine were organized and spread from one end of the empire to the other.

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25 The Jews in the Arab World

The renowned toleration that the Jews enjoyed under Muslim rule was not the product of native Muslim liberality. No less than Christians, the peoples of Islam claimed exclusive possession of the truth and exhibited unconcealed contempt for other religions. Muslim theologians and demagogues produced an anti-Jewish literature that was informed by a hatred of the Jews and Judaism that in no way falls short of its Christian counterpart.

The Jewish experience under Islam began with massacre and expulsion from the northern half of the Arabian Peninsula. The "Pact of Umar," although historically questionable, nevertheless reflected the prevailing attitude of Muslim rulers and jurists: infidels (*dhimmis*) deserved protection only at the price of displaying marked subservience to Muslims and their faith. The persecution and humiliation endured by the Jews of Almohade North Africa (1147–1276) and Zaydi Yemen (c. 1165 and after) were unmatched in their brutality by any Christian state prior to the anti-Semitic excesses of nineteenth-century czarist Russia.

Nevertheless, it remains true that in Babylonia, Spain, North Africa, Egypt, and Ottoman Turkey, Jews enjoyed centuries of uninterrupted tranquillity. In these countries, where felicitous conditions deprived them of much of a political or economic history, the story of the Jews is truly the

A.D.	500-550	Compilation of Babylonian Talmud
	c. 650	Beginning of Babylonian Gaonate
	760-763	Gaonate of Yehudai
	c. 760	Anan, religious leader
	c. 800	Beginning of Karaite sect
	882-942	Saadia Gaon
	c. 950	Hasdai ibn Shaprut of Cordova, physician and scholar
	968-1038	Gaonate of Sherira and Hai
	992-1055	Samuel ibn Nagrela of Granada
c.	1000-1148	Golden Age of Spanish Hebrew Literature
c.	1075-1141	Judah ha-Levi, poet
	1135-1204	Moses Maimonides
	1147-1148	Almohade conquest of Spain

record of Jewish activity within the framework of their own autonomy, of their internal tensions and adjustments to new political cultural contexts. Men of distinction reflect an individuality, and frequently an originality, that are all but unknown in the Jewish communities of Christian Europe.

The crucial factor favoring the Jews was that in every land conquered by the Muslims the Jews were but one of several non-Arab groups. In states where political alignments often corresponded to ethnic loyalties, the presence of the Jew was not as obvious, and certainly not as keenly felt, as in areas peopled predominantly by one ethnic stock. Second, in many areas the Muslims found the Jews concentrated in considerable numbers and possessed of a tradition of communal organization. In such cases, it was far less costly, and often quite advantageous, to mobilize the services of cooperative Jewish leaders whose interests in maintaining a quiescent and disciplined community coincided with those of the alien conquerors.

When the armies of Umar ibn al-Khattab overran Mesopotamia and Iran (636-640), they found a sizable population of Jews living alongside several other Aramaic-speaking peoples. Eager for a swift return to normality, the Muslims confirmed the relationship that had prevailed under the Persian empire between the central government and subject peoples, and they appointed native personnel to administer the internal affairs of the various groups. As a tolerated "people of Scripture," the Jews of Baby-

lonia, like their Christian neighbors, were classified as a protected minority to be governed directly by an exilarch from their own ranks. Besides keeping the peace in the Jewish community, this prince was to be accountable for the regular collection of the poll tax and other special tributes imposed by the Muslims on all conquered peoples.

The great majority of the million-odd Jews in the new Arab empire were concentrated in one area. Many farmed their own lands and others worked as artisans or merchants in towns frequently peopled overwhelmingly by Jews. All aspects of their civil and religious life were administered by Jewish officials in accordance with their own law codified in the Babylonian Talmud (c. 500) and by institutions financed by taxes collected from all Jews living in the territories taken from Persia and Byzantium. The powers of legislation and adjudication reposed with rabbinic academies, or high courts, patterned largely after those of the Palestinian rabbinate and headed by presidents known as Geonim. Highly developed communal machinery run with a tight discipline by an officialdom largely recruited from a limited circle of leading Jewish families made the Jewish settlement in Mesopotamia a kind of oligarchic state-within-a-state.

By 725 the burdensome taxation and the heavy hand of the oligarchy aroused the same kind of organized opposition among disaffected Jews that the Umayyads had generated among Persian and Arab Muslims. Particularly in the outlying areas of Persia, political and economic resentment erupted in armed revolts coupled with programs of legal and religious reform. Vestiges of long-suppressed sectarian faith and usage found small but willing audiences, who responded to the appeals of charismatic chieftains to establish independent Jewish societies. Although the revolts were quickly crushed, discontent continued to smolder in many quarters. The most impressive coup of these missionaries was the conversion (c. 750) of the ruling families of the bellicose Khazar tribes north of the Caucasus to a syncretist form of Judaism. However, this Jewish kingdom, which survived until about 1000, remained isolated from Jewish society at large, although it became a byword for Jews dreaming of the resurgence of Jewish political power. In the Near East itself, the sects quickly receded into obscurity and failed to present any sustained challenge to rabbinic control.

The internal policies of the Abbasids, following their seizure of power in 750, provided further opportunities for the extension of exilarchic-rabbinic influence. Bent on consolidating the vast Muslim empire into a cohesive unit directed from Baghdad, the Abbasids supported any activity that would draw minority groups further into the orbit of their own lieutenants, who, in the case of the Jews, were the exilarch and his rabbinic associates. Seizing the new opportunity, the exilarch in 760 appointed to the Gaonate of the senior academy of Sura a sage consumed by the vision of a religiously uniform Jewry. Although afflicted with blindness, Yehudai

Gaon managed in the three years of his presidency to launch a program that was to leave a permanent stamp on all Jewish culture. Outlawing any deviation from Babylonian religious usage, Yehudai's campaign raised the Babylonian Talmud to quasi-Scriptural status and drove the Palestinian corpus into an obscurity from which it never quite emerged. Even in Palestine, the Babylonian Talmud became the supreme source of Jewish law and from there made its way to the Palestine-oriented Jewish communities of Byzantium and Italy. Hence, even when communication between Jews of Muslim and Christian countries had been virtually severed, medieval Jewish religion and community structure retained a basic uniformity.

The Gaonic program of suppressing local differences stimulated powerful reaction on the part of those disaffected with the ruling class. Far from being antinomian, the anti-Talmudic heresiarch Anan (c. 760) and the Karaites, or "Scripturally oriented," sect that emerged from his activity around 800 combined elements of ultrapietism with a reaffirmation of the centrality of Palestine to Jewish faith, a tendency which the Babylonian leadership had been laboring to attenuate. Astutely renouncing messianic activism, the new sect won official Abbasid toleration and succeeded in stimulating many to migrate and live a life of mourning and deprivation in the Holy Land. There the Karaites soon matured into a synagogal organization in which wealth, scholarship, and formal community structure—led by a Davidic prince—played stabilizing roles. Their missionary vigor also enabled them to establish sizable communities throughout the world from Egypt and Byzantium to the African Maghreb and Christian Spain.

The great social changes that overtook Arab society in the wake of the Abbasid economic and cultural programs in the eighth and ninth centuries inevitably had profound effects on Jewish society. The increased premium placed on ability rather than on ethnic or even religious origins opened new avenues to Jews. By 900 some had gained employment as civil servants and the right to practice medicine, and in 908 a few were empowered to function as state bankers. Thanks to their connections with the court, the new Jewish rich played an ever increasing role in the affairs of their community and especially in the choice of communal officers. The social metamorphosis was discernible even in the highest echelons with the admission of foreigners of talent and of scholarly members of the banking families to positions of influence in the academies.

However, by far the most pervasive effect of the new atmosphere in Baghdad was in the cultural and religious changes that could be discerned in all quarters of Arab society. The adoption of Arabic as the language of the empire, coupled with the Abbasid sponsorship of a huge program of translation of works in many subjects from Greek, Syriac, and Persian, converted Baghdad into the cultural emporium that Alexandria had been in

Hellenistic times. Muslims, Christians, and Jews exchanged ideas freely. Philosophical circles abounded, and with them skepticism and religious deviation of every sort. The air of middle-class individualism evoked new expressions of freedom from the yoke of authoritarian discipline. An aggressive anti-Gaonic literature poured forth steadily in the ninth century from orthodox Karaites, Marcion-like gnostics, and, to cap them all, from the resurgent rabbinic academies of Palestine that had begun to reclaim old prerogatives. In Iran some Jewish communities had refused to pay their assessments to the exilarch and had to be brought into line by force. Even the two Babylonian academies were at each other's throats over the solicitation of funds in new Jewish territories in North Africa and Spain. By 900 the efficient exilarchic machine of the seventh and eighth centuries had become a memory.

In a daring move, doubtless inspired by Abbasid techniques, a strong-willed exilarch appointed to the presidency of Sura in 928 Saadia b Joseph al-Fayyumi, an Egyptian scholar who had distinguished himself as a protagonist of Babylonian rabbinism. While the unbridled ambitions of the exilarch and the Gaon soon brought them into open conflict, and drove the rabbinic institutions into even worse straits than before, Saadia's short term as Gaon provided him with the opportunity to circulate throughout the world a series of works that were to signalize the advent of a new era in Jewish culture. For if Baghdad had replaced Alexandria, Saadia became its Philo. Writing voluminously and incessantly, he translated the Scriptures into Arabic, composed codes and commentaries in the vernacular, and, as a crowning achievement, issued a philosophical defense of Judaism that remains a classic specimen of Arabic Kalam. Frustrated in his political ambitions, he had consciously and deliberately provided the models for a synthesis of Jewish and Arabic cultures, the fruit of which would become manifest only later in another corner of the Arabic world.

The splintering of the Abbasid empire by the Fatimids of North Africa and Umayyads of Spain in the tenth century enabled the Jewish communities of Ifriqiya, Egypt, Palestine, and Spain to end their umbilical dependence on Babylonian religious institutions. The desperate efforts of two of the greatest Geonim, Sherira (968–1006) and his son Hai (1004–1038), to retain the loyalties of outlying Jewish communities generated a correspondence which has delighted historians but which did not halt the centrifugal shift to new poles. Although the secessionist Muslim rulers permitted contacts between the Jewries of east and west to continue, they preferred to see local capital invested at home. Accordingly, they fanned the pride of their own Jewries by encouraging them to develop native communal institutions and in time even permitted local heads to assume princely Hebrew titles like Nagid or Nasi.

Of these new communities by far the most scintillating emerged in Andalusian Spain. As friendly *dhimmis* in an area where many—but by no means all—Christians were openly hostile, the Jews were accorded the full measure of Muslim toleration and, on occasion, employment as petty officials. Active in commerce, in vine and silk cultivation, in textile manufacture, and in the state-supported slave trade, many amassed considerable wealth and culture. While Jewish educational facilities existed there by 800, until about 1000 Spain represented a major benefactor of the Babylonian academies. The first Jewish prayer book was compiled by a Gaon of Sura (c. 860) in response to a request by a Spanish community, perhaps Barcelona.

The decisive turn came in the wake of the campaign of Abd al-Rahman III (912–961) and al-Hakam II (961–976) to make Cordova the Baghdad of the west. After achieving military and naval mastery over their neighbors, these Umayyads launched an extensive building program and attracted men of science and letters to their capital. Libraries and universities sprang up alongside royal palaces and gardens, gaining for the capital renown as “the jewel of the Maghreb.”

The temper of the age inspired the head of the Jewish community to undertake a similar program for his own group, of course on a smaller scale. Hasdai ibn Shaprut, a physician who had served the court with distinction in several diplomatic missions, lavished considerable sums to draw men of Jewish law and letters to Cordova and to provide them with libraries. Obviously obsessed with the idea of Jewish rebirth politically as well as culturally, he spared no efforts to make contact with the Jewish king of the Khazars and to inquire whether the latter had any information on the date of the messianic era. It was a fantasy, to be sure, but one which shaped the mentality of more than one of his circle.

Although civil wars in the beginning of the eleventh century dismembered the Umayyad kingdom into a congeries of petty states, and thereby put an end to the integrity of the Andalusian Jewish community, the period of “the petty kings” (1020–1086) and of their Aloravide successors (1086–1148) became “the golden age” of Spanish Jewish culture. Since each petty monarch fancied his own bailiwick as a new Cordova, the new courts welcomed talent and support from any quarter. In this Babel of ethnic groups struggling for social and political mastery, the Jews were among the few who were above suspicion of conspiring to traduce their rulers to Umayyads, Christians, or “Slavs.” Jews of wealth and culture everywhere soared to positions of influence. What was particularly attractive about them, according to contemporaries, was their elegance in Arabic speech and manners, qualities esteemed above all others by the *reyes de taifas* as marks of ability. In such a climate, Saadiah’s synthesis and Ibn

Shaprut's example became models for the Jewish courtiers, who vied with one another in endowing poets and grammarians, philosophers and rabbinic jurists.

If Jews required any vindication for this new style of life they found it in the spectacular career of Samuel ibn Nagrela. An alumnus of the academy of Cordova and of Ibn Shaprut's circle, he possessed a rare combination of gifts: he was a skillful Hebrew poet, a superb Talmudist, a master stylist in Arabic, an astute military strategist and political administrator. His meteoric rise to the vizierate of Granada (c. 1030–1056) became a byword to Jew and Muslim alike. The resentment of the Muslim mob, cleverly aroused by demagogues, erupted in 1067 in a massacre which took the life of his son and successor along with those of hundreds of Jews of Granada. While no Jew ever again attained such heights of power in medieval society, the Jewish courtier tradition, epitomized by the Ibn Nagrelas, remained at the heart of Sephardic culture for centuries.

The courtier tradition prized as its outspoken goal the creation of a type who integrated and synthesized the wisdom of Greece—in Arabic garb—with the legacy of Israel. Sporting the Hebrew title of Nagid simultaneously with that of Vizier, the Ibn Nagrelas lavished support on their favorites—rabbis, poets, exegetes, philosophers, mathematicians, astronomers—and aggressively claimed the equality of the Spanish rabbinate with that of Babylonia. Entranced by Arabic verse, they strove to revive the vitality of the Hebrew language—which they set to verse in Arabic meter!—so that the bards of Jacob might vie with the poets of Ishmael. Thus the glorious poetry of Solomon ibn Gabirol, Moses ibn Ezra, and Judah ha-Levi; the philosophic treatises of Ibn Gabirol (Avicbron), Ibn Daud (Avendauth) and Ibn Zaddik; the scientific treatises of Abraham bar Hiyya and Abraham ibn Ezra—all these were the works of genuine intellects sensitive to every ripple of Arabic culture and, accordingly, seized by its love of beauty and knowledge.

In much smaller measure, and with a more traditionally rabbinic orientation, native Jewish culture flowered simultaneously in Qairawan, Egypt, and Palestine. But for a brief period of persecution (1009–1021) under the insane Fatimid al-Hakim, the Jews prospered as merchants, artisans, and civil servants. Karaites and Rabbanites lived side by side, often cooperating with each other in civic affairs and cultivating separately new methods of study of Scripture and rabbinic literature.

The Almohade avalanche that swept across North Africa and Andalus (1146–1148) put an abrupt end to *dhimmi* life in the lands of western Islam. While many Jews perished—along with Christians and Muslims—the majority either fled to Egypt and Christian Spain or persisted for more than half a century in adhering to Judaism secretly. While their efforts to

reconstitute their Andalusian pattern of life in Aragon, Castile, and Provence were only partially successful, they brought to Latin Europe a rich legacy that influenced the course of European scholarship and philosophy as a whole and of northern Jewish culture in particular.

Ironically, the summa of Andalusian Judaism appeared at the time that Almohade control was at its highest. The works of Moses Maimonides (1135–1204), issued in Egypt, but prepared during decades of wandering and furtive life under fanatical rulers of the Maghreb, remain to this day the only systematic codification of all of Jewish law and the most incisive synthesis of Jewish faith with Aristotelian philosophy. However, all of his monumental works betray the underlying despair of reflective men of Arab society—epitomized in sociological terms some two centuries later by Ibn Khaldun—of achieving lasting satisfaction in public service. To be sure, Maimonides was not the first philosopher to suggest that freedom could be attained only through contemplative withdrawal in a society rigorously controlled by law and reason. However, he was the first to lay out a detailed Jewish blueprint for such a pattern of life, and to show the exiles of Andalus how they might find solace and certainty in a strange world. In Ayyubid Egypt, where he found political freedom and financial security, he established a dynasty of communal heads which persisted until the end of the fourteenth century. However, the society envisioned by the Jewish philosopher-king was never to become a reality. Long-entrenched Jewish patterns of life, coupled with the upheavals in the Middle East beginning with the thirteenth century, left the work of Maimonides a solitary epitaph to a glorious culture.

Jewish community life in the lands of Islam persisted down to modern times. However, the decay that weakened Arab society and culture affected the Levantine Jew as well. The renaissance that Ottoman Jewry enjoyed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries was basically a resurgence of Sephardic culture that had become totally Hispanicized and, in any case, never an integral part of Ottoman society and culture. It remained for Jews enflamed by the European Enlightenment to rediscover the glories of Babylonia and Andalus and to recapture the treasures of the Judeo-Arabic experience.

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Asia and Africa

26 Sub-Saharan Africa

Although southern Africa was the birthplace of man as we know him, two thousand years ago Africa south of the Sahara was still a sparsely occupied land. In the center and south lived small groups of Bushmen, nomadic hunters and gatherers still in the Stone Age. The east was inhabited, though thinly, by Kushitic peoples who herded cattle and grew cereal crops but had not yet learned the use of iron. Only the Sudanic belt stretching across the continent from the Atlantic Ocean to the edge of the Ethiopian plateau supported a relatively large population. This region had known settled agriculture since about 3000 B.C., and its inhabitants, of mixed racial composition but basically Negro, were technologically in advance of their neighbors to the south. Whereas most Africans at that time were food collectors, the Sudanic Negro was a food producer. In the area of the Niger Bend in West Africa he had succeeded in domesticating his own cereals, such as sorghum and an African type of rice, crops he had found were better suited to his environment than the wheat and barley of western Asia.

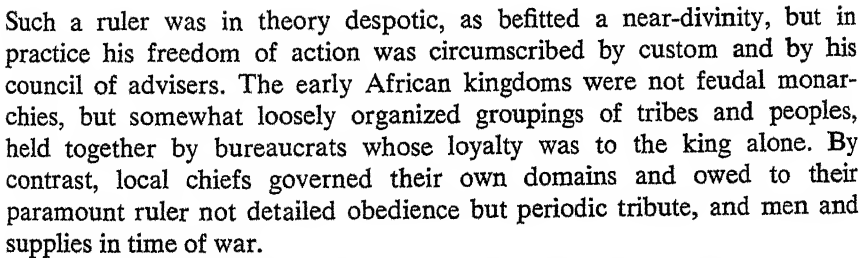
About the fourth or fifth century B.C. the art of iron smelting was imported into the Sudan from Egypt by way of Nubia, with the result that the Sudan's Negro inhabitants gained a powerful advantage in the struggle for survival against nature on the one hand and against other Africans, living still farther south, on the other. Whether as hunter or warrior, farmer or fisherman, the possessor of iron weapons, tools, and implements could outfight and outproduce Stone Age man. Moreover, since there was no Bronze Age in sub-Saharan Africa, the coming of iron had an even more decisive impact there than elsewhere in the ancient world. Iron technology, added to larger numbers, better agricultural methods, and, possibly, greater social cohesion, enabled the Negroes to expand throughout the African continent. They did so at the expense of the indigenous inhabitants of the area, whom they conquered, absorbed, or displaced.

- A.D. c. 3rd–4th cents. Rise of empire of Ghana
- 4th cent. Rise of Christian kingdom of Axum (Ethiopia)
- c. 800 Founding of the kingdom of Kanem
- c. 1040 Mission of Abdallah to the Goddala
- c. 1076 Almoravid conquest of Ghana
- c. 1090 Conversion to Islam of *mai* of Kanem
- 11th–14th cents Building of “Great Zimbabwe” complex
- c. 1100 Earliest evidence of stone mosques on East African coast, founding of Timbuktu
- 12th–16th cents. Rule of Zagwe dynasty in Ethiopia
- c. 1200 Rise of sultanate of Kilwa
- 1203 Sack of Ghana by Sumanguru of Susu
- 1230 Accession of Sun Dyata of Mali
- 1235 Battle of Kirina
- 1324–1325 Pilgrimage to Mecca of Musa I, *mansa* of Mali
- c. 1464 Accession of *sonni* Ali Ber of Songhai
- 1482 Building of Elmina Castle (São Jorge da Mina)
- 1488 Doubling of Cape of Good Hope by Bartholomeu Dias
- 1493 Accession of *askiya* Muhammad the Great of Songhai
- 1498 Arrival of Portuguese on East African coast
- 1590–1591 Moroccan invasion of the western Sudan

To begin with, the Negroes (or Bantu, as they are known in the east and south) had to confine themselves to the drier regions where the cereals they took with them on their migrations, or found already in cultivation, could grow. But after the introduction into Africa of Southeast Asian "wet-zone" crops like the yam and the banana (brought to Madagascar by Indonesian colonists during the first five centuries A.D.), they found it possible to move into the humid forests, low-lying river valleys, and coastal plains as well. This gradual occupation of almost the whole of the arable soil of Africa by the Negroes of the west and by the Bantu of the east and south—the fundamental fact of African history—took approximately 1,500 years. It was almost complete when, at the end of the fifteenth century, the Portuguese rounded the Cape of Good Hope on their way to India and met black-skinned men living close to the southern tip of the continent in the area now called Natal.

During the millennium and a half of the Negro-Bantu migrations sub-Saharan Africa was largely cut off from the rest of the world; indeed, most of the interior remained unknown to outsiders until well into the nineteenth century. Geography dictated this isolation. In the first place, the Sahara Desert, while never a total barrier to intercourse between north and south, at least strongly discouraged it. The trans-Saharan trade routes, too, connected the Mediterranean and Middle East with the Sudan, not with sub-Saharan Africa as a whole. Second, almost all the great rivers of Africa descend to the sea via rapids and waterfalls, and thus fail to provide an easy means of communication (such as all other continents possess) from the coast to the interior. Nor can the coast itself be said to welcome the overseas mariner; much of Africa is fringed by mangrove swamp and sand bar, there are few natural harbors along its shores, and on the Atlantic side the surf is heavy. Third, wide areas of the African savanna are infested with tsetse fly, the carrier of the debilitating disease known as sleeping sickness, which affects both man and beast. In such areas draft animals cannot be used. Thus, until the coming of mechanical transport in modern times, the only way to cross most of the continent was to walk, carrying one's belongings on one's head.

The earliest states in sub-Saharan Africa therefore grew up enjoying little or no direct contact with the outside world. They arose along two main axes: one running east and west across the broad belt of the Sudan; the other north and south along the highland spine which stretches from Nubia and Ethiopia at one end to Kipling's "great, grey, green, greasy" Limpopo River at the other. Typically, the rulers of these states were divine kings upon whose continued personal well-being the prosperity of their kingdoms depended. When a king became senile or impotent, he was ceremonially killed, and a new, healthy monarch installed in his place.



The reason states grew up in some areas rather than in others seems in most cases to have been connected with the demands of long-distance

trade. Of this a clear example is provided by the empire of Ghana. Extending at the height of its power from the upper reaches of the Senegal River to the northern curve of the Niger Bend, Ghana arose about the third or fourth century A.D., began to decline at the end of the eleventh century, and finally disappeared from history during the fifteenth. To the Arabs it was known as "the land of gold." Its ruler, the *kayamaga* ("king of gold"), was reputed to be the richest and most powerful monarch in all the Bilad as-Sudan ("land of the blacks"). Yet Ghana had few natural resources of its own. Its wealth derived from the levies it was able to impose on the trade across the Sahara, by means of which the gold, slaves, and kola nuts of West Africa were exchanged for North African manufactures, horses, foodstuffs, and salt.

Another sub-Saharan kingdom well known to the ancient world was the state of Kush in Nubia. Like Ghana, Kush owed its prosperity to trade. Its ivory, ebony, gum, hides, ostrich plumes, and slaves were carried down the Nile to Egypt and across the Red Sea to Arabia and Mesopotamia. For long Kush was a dependency of Egypt, culturally as well as politically, but about 1000 B.C. its rulers broke away from the suzerainty of the pharaohs and, especially after the transfer of the capital from Napata to Meroë about 540 B.C., developed their own distinctively African civilization and culture. Meroë was eventually conquered in the fourth century A.D. by Axum, a state of northeastern Ethiopia. Under the influence of missionaries from Syria the rulers of Axum adopted the Monophysite Christian faith, thus laying the foundation of the kingdom which was ultimately to develop into modern Ethiopia. The scriptures used by the Ethiopian Church today were translated from Greek into Ge'ez, the language spoken in Axum, as long ago as the sixth century.

The main rival of Christianity in Africa, Islam, began to penetrate south of the Sahara soon after the Arab conquest of Egypt in 641. In the western and central Sudan Arab and Berber merchants from North Africa proved effective proselytizers, and for the most part the new faith spread easily and peacefully. The commercial advantages that conversion brought with it—the art of writing, a settled law, access to an expanding and profitable market—were highly attractive to those who depended on trade with Muslim North Africa for their wealth and power. By the eleventh century Islam had become the religion of most of the desert nomads and of many of the rulers of the caravan termini on the southern side of the Sahara. In some cases, however, these conversions were nominal, and paganism continued to flourish even in supposedly Islamized areas. The chief of one desert tribe, while on pilgrimage to Mecca, was shocked to discover that he and his people had scant knowledge of the true Faith. He returned home determined to effect a thorough religious reformation and,

to assist in this task, recruited in North Africa a famous teacher and divine, Abdallah ibn Yasin. Arriving in the Sudan, Abdallah tried to reform his patron's tribe by preaching and persuasion. But peaceful methods failed, and he formed a fighting corps of young zealots, the Almoravids, launching them in holy war against all who refused to heed the call to orthodox Islam. An obvious target for attack was pagan Ghana, already weakened by drought and famine and by a century or more of warfare with desert tribes. In 1076 the Almoravids overwhelmed Ghana and sacked its capital.

No large state succeeded Ghana as the dominant power in the western Sudan until the thirteenth century. By this time the chief contenders for supremacy were Sumanguru, king of Susu, and Sun Dyata, chief of the small but militarily powerful kingdom of Nyani. When at the decisive battle of Kirina (1235) Sun Dyata's forces defeated Sumanguru's, the way was cleared for the creation of Mali, the second great empire of the western Sudan.

The years of Mali's dominance were from the mid-thirteenth to the mid-fourteenth century. Its territory extended from the lower reaches of the Gambia and Senegal rivers to a line running from the Asben oasis in the Sahara to the Niger-Benue confluence in what is now Nigeria, and its rulers made their influence felt as far north as the borders of Morocco and Tunis. Stronger and richer than Ghana had ever been, Mali was also better known to the outside world. In 1324-1325 one of its *mansas*, or emperors, Musa I, made the pilgrimage to Mecca. He took with him a huge train of courtiers, servants, and slaves, and a treasure in gold dust weighing, by modern calculation, 3,800 kilograms. According to contemporary accounts, the largesse he distributed in Egypt and the Holy Places plus the liberal spending of his entourage depressed the price of gold on the Cairo exchanges for a generation. The unheralded appearance of so wealthy a king from the "Land of the Blacks" made a deep impression, and from the reign of the *mansa* Musa onward, Mali, or "Malel," began to appear regularly, in an approximately correct position, on the maps of the Middle East and Europe. Before long, indeed, the reputation of West Africa as a source of gold was to arouse the cupidity of both the Muslims of North Africa and the Christians of western Europe.

Between the eastern confines of Mali and the region of Lake Chad lay Hausaland, where already in the time of Ghana the seven Hausa city-states were being formed: Kano and Rano, Daura and Biram, Katsina, Gobir, and Zazzau. As a people the Hausa never joined together under one rule, but competed fiercely among themselves for trade and political power. Protected by strong city walls, they developed a highly urbanized society, excelling as manufacturers and long-distance merchants. The rulers and magnates of the towns tended to be Muslims, of greater or lesser orthodoxy,

but most rural Hausa remained pagan until the nineteenth century and beyond.

East of Lake Chad the kingdom of Kanem was founded by Zaghawa nomads about A.D. 800. In the eleventh century the ruling dynasty of this kingdom accepted Islam, and under the *mai* (king) Dunama I (1097–1150) the frontiers of the state were extended north across the desert to the Fezzan and westward into Hausaland. Dunama is said to have had 30,000 horsemen under his command. Over the centuries the center of gravity of Kanem gradually moved from the eastern to the western side of Lake Chad, and the state changed its name to Bornu. Among the kingdoms of the Sudan, Bornu had the reputation of being more rigorous in its religious observances than most of its neighbors. It had cultural as well as commercial links with the Middle East, maintained a rest house at Cairo for pilgrims going to Mecca, and in the seventeenth century imported Turks to instruct its soldiers in musketry. It survived as an independent kingdom until the age of European imperialism.

In the Niger Bend region, meanwhile, a new power had arisen to challenge the might of Mali. About 1464 a warrior king, the *sonni* Ali, came to the throne of the riverine state of Gao in the middle Niger. By his death in 1492 he had created the Songhai empire and had extended his rule over the whole of the western Sudan. The military supremacy of Songhai rested on cavalry, on levies of foot soldiers, and on flotillas of war canoes which patrolled the thousand miles of the “navigable Niger.” The dynasty of rulers who succeeded Ali, known as the *askiyas*, maintained his conquests and systematized the imperial government he had created. A bureaucracy, manned mainly by slaves, levied dues on trade and collected taxes, and a conscript army kept the peace and ensured that the trade routes remained open. The government was run by a council of ministers with clearly defined duties and responsibilities. In the great days of Songhai the mosques of Timbuktu and Jenne were famous throughout northern Africa for their piety and scholarship; students came from many parts of the Muslim world to study in them. Until the death of the *askiya* Da’ud in 1582, Songhai was a prosperous, powerful, and outwardly stable empire. But within a decade it had disintegrated, struck down by invaders from the north.

Relations between Songhai and the sultanate of Morocco had long been less than cordial. The basic cause of hostility was competition for the trans-Saharan trade and the valuable salt mine of Taghaza in the northern desert. Without the salt of Taghaza Songhai could not live, but Morocco claimed the territory in which the mine lay. The Moroccan sultan, too, had an army which urgently needed employing lest its commanders seek to satisfy their ambitions at home and at their master’s expense. Spurred on by hopes of

rich booty in the Land of the Blacks and using as an excuse an insulting message received from the reigning *askiya*, the sultan, in 1590, dispatched an army of 3,000 men due south across the desert.

Initially the Moroccans were everywhere victorious. The much larger armies of Songhai, consisting of cavalry with spears and lances and foot soldiers armed with bows and arrows, were easily mastered by Moroccan cannon and muskets. The capital, Gao, and the main towns along the Niger fell to the invaders in rapid succession. But in the south, where the terrain favored guerrilla tactics rather than open warfare and where the Moroccan superiority in fire power could not be brought to bear, the Songhai more than held their own. The central government had been destroyed and the caravan termini occupied, but the war went on. The invaders obtained less loot than expected, and after replacing the field commander more than once and dispatching several columns of reinforcements without improving the situation, the Sultan of Morocco lost interest. His soldiers were abandoned in their distant outposts beyond the Sahara and, in course of time, were absorbed in the indigenous population.

The Moroccan invasions brought down the Songhai empire, but left no enduring monument in the western Sudan. More than ten years of warfare devastated the countryside. Learning, culture, and prosperity were destroyed, the trans-Saharan trade declined, and the petty states which replaced Songhai maintained no imperial tradition. Timbuktu the Golden, revered by its chronicler as "that exquisite city, pure, delicious and illustrious, dearer than any in the world," became what it is today, a mud-built town of a few thousand inhabitants at the edge of the barren Sahara.

From about the second century B.C. Greek traders based on ports in the Red Sea began sailing south around Cape Guardafui to "Azania," as the coast of East Africa was then called. Azania produced palm oil, ivory, tortoise shell, rhinoceros horn, and slaves. All were valuable commodities, and thus Azania naturally provoked the interest of the ancient Mediterranean world. Some of the reports on East Africa gleaned from itinerant Greek traders and ships' supercargoes were surprisingly accurate. Ptolemy's *Geography*, compiled between the second and fifth centuries, described a "great snow mountain" in the East African interior, and claimed that the River Nile had its source in inland lakes. Both pieces of information were true—the snow mountain is clearly Mount Kilimanjaro—though both were vehemently denied for the next 1,500 years by geographers less well informed than Ptolemy.

Merchants from south Arabia, the Persian Gulf, and northwestern India had also long traded with the East African coast, and continued to do so after the rise of Islam cut the Christian traders of the Mediterranean off

from the commerce of the Indian Ocean. In course of time some of these Asian merchants settled in East Africa permanently. They were joined by religious refugees from Oman and Shiraz on the Persian Gulf, by men who sought a sanctuary where they could practice in peace beliefs regarded as heretical in their homelands. The total number of immigrants was probably quite small, but their impact on the East African coast was considerable. They were responsible for beginning the process whereby a chain of independent settlements grew up all along the coast from Mogadiscio in the north to Sofala in the south. These settlements existed on, and for, trade; modern historians have characterized them as the "city-states" of medieval East Africa.

By the mid-thirteenth century there were between thirty and forty of these states, many located for ease of defense on islands. None appears to have willingly recognized the supremacy of any other, but for a century or more one of them, Kilwa, attained preeminence. The rulers of Kilwa built mosques, palaces, and bathhouses of coral and stone, minted their own coins, and were wealthy enough to import porcelain from China. The ruling dynasties of all the city-states were Muslim, the populations they controlled were a mixture of immigrant Arabo-Persians and indigenous Bantu. The resulting amalgam of foreign and local languages, customs, and racial stocks produced in course of time the distinctive East African culture known as Swahili.

The East African city-states possessed far-ranging economic influence, but their political control did not extend more than a few miles inland from the coast. The interior peoples themselves brought the wealth of East and Central Africa to the shores of the Indian Ocean. Columns of slaves balancing elephants' tusks on their heads plodded for hundreds of miles along bush tracks as they were driven to the markets of Kilwa, Mafia, Mombasa, or Malindi. On arrival burdens and bearers alike were sold to traders who shipped them to Arabia and Persia and India. Gold from the Limpopo Basin and copper from Katanga were similarly transported over long distances to Indian Ocean ports.

In Central Africa at this period the leading interior state was governed by a monarch known as the Mwana Mtapas, the "Monomotapa" of later Portuguese accounts. The Mwana Mtapas ruled a 700-mile stretch of the Zambezi Valley between the Kariba Gorge and the sea. They were heirs to an even older dynasty which had been responsible for building the fortress-shrine of Great Zimbabwe in Mashonaland (Rhodesia). The tall stone ruins of Zimbabwe stand today as a mute reminder of the existence of large-scale political organization in the depths of Central Africa long before the first Europeans set foot on the coast.

Throughout the savannas and forests of sub-Saharan Africa the proc-

esses of state formation threw up many rulers like the Mwana Mtapas. In the region of the southern Congo arose the Lunda-Luba empire of the Mwata Yamvo. In the Great Lakes country of interior East Africa the cattle-herding Cwezi kings held dominion until their overthrow about the beginning of the sixteenth century by Lwo invaders from the north, who established in their turn the states that grew into Bunyoro and Buganda. A century or more before this the *manikongo* (king of Congo) had maintained such state that the first Portuguese who arrived at his capital were amazed at its opulence. The king of Portugal made haste to form an alliance with this prince of tropical Africa, since his kingdom was obviously too powerful to be conquered. The first European visitors to the state of Benin in the Niger Delta were equally impressed. They traded eagerly with its inhabitants for cloth, pepper, and gold, and found the local people courteous, shrewd, and, in the words of one sixteenth-century English account, "verrie gentle and loveing."

Before the coming of the European, Africa south of the Sahara was in the preindustrial stage of economic development, but in many areas its people had created highly organized networks of long-distance trade. Large states and politics had been established, in some cases consisting of territories and populations greater in size than those which existed at the time in Europe. Of the outside world, however, Africans in general remained profoundly ignorant. It was perhaps mainly for this reason that they were about to be overwhelmed by the greatest tragedy in the history of their own or any other continent, the 400-year-long maritime slave trade.

For Further Reading

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27 The Chinese Empire: The Great Era

By 577, the long period of political disunity in China was nearing its end. Two major dynasties divided the nation between themselves, a Chinese one in the south and a barbarian one in the north. The most influential statesman in the latter was a Chinese, Yang Chien, who in 581 dismissed the last

A.D.	581–618	Sui dynasty
	605–610	Grand Canal built
	612–614	Korean campaigns
	618–907	T'ang dynasty
	627–649	Reign of T'ai-tsung
	630	Defeat of Eastern Turks
	656	Defeat of Western Turks
	690–705	Reign of Empress Wu
	713–755	Reign of Hsuan-tsung
	751	Battle of Talas River
	755	Rebellion of An Lu-shan
	780	Tax reform
	821	Peace between China and Tibet
	840	Uighur empire destroyed
	841–845	Religious persecutions
	879	Looting of Canton
	907–960	China divided
	960–1126	Northern Sung dynasty
	1004	Peace between China and Liao
	1024	World's first paper currency
	1044	Peace between China and Hsi-hsia
	1069–1076	Wang An-shih in power
	1125	Liao empire destroyed
	1127–1279	Southern Sung dynasty
	1130–1200	Chu Hsi
	1135	Lin-an capital of Southern Sung
	1141	Peace between China and Chin

boy emperor, ascended the throne himself, and founded the Sui dynasty. His posthumous name is Emperor Wen. He defeated the south in 589, and thereby reunited China. Emperor Wen's rise to power was very similar to that of Wang Mang, with the difference that he was successful. The dynastic historians treat him therefore not condescendingly as a usurper, but respectfully as the man who received the Mandate of Heaven.

The Sui dynasty consisted of only two rulers. Emperor Wen died in 604, and was succeeded by his son, possibly his murderer, Emperor Yang. But in spite of its short reign, the Sui was a period of great activity. A centralized bureaucracy was restored and staffed. Ch'ang-an became the capital, with Lo-yang as a subsidiary one. Agricultural and fiscal reforms were attempted. Since the Yangtze delta was emerging as the key economic area, and the capitals depended on it for grain and other supplies, the first Grand Canal was built between 605 and 610. It made use of earlier canals, and connected the area of present Hang-chou with the Yellow River, a distance of more than 500 miles. The Great Wall was reconstructed as a defensive barrier at the northern border.

The Sui dynasty did less well in the field of foreign policy. The empire had shrunk since Han times. The Ordos Region had been lost, as well as all possessions in present-day Manchuria and Korea. The Tarim Basin in Central Asia was no longer under Chinese control, except briefly between 609 and 611. In Yunnan and Kweichow, a Thai-speaking tribe was in the process of founding the state of Nan-chao, which remained independent until 1252. Fukien, on the other hand, had become an integral part of the nation. It had been assimilated through a gradual, peaceful immigration of Chinese colonists, which had begun in the last decades of Later Han. In addition, the Sui dynasty managed to regain possession of the Red River delta in Indochina.

Emperor Yang made the mistake of imitating the Han dynasties in his relations with Korea. He wished, at all costs, to reestablish Chinese rule, which embroiled him in an expensive and inconclusive war. In 612 he attacked the North Korean state of Koguryō, but only conquered southern Manchuria to the Liao River. A campaign in 613 had to be discontinued. While Chinese troops reached Pyōngyang in 614, they were unable to take it.

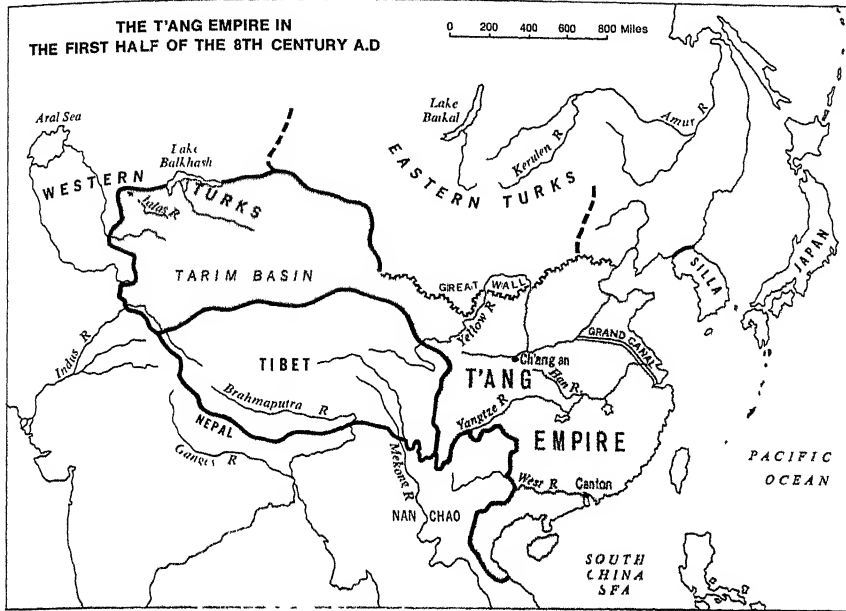
This military debacle was aggravated by pressure from the Turks, who had become the dominant tribe in Central Asia since the middle of the sixth century and had brought vast territories under their rule. In 582 their nation split into the Eastern and Western Turks, both of whom were a threat to China. A great raid in 615 caught Emperor Yang unawares. He was almost captured, and after his escape withdrew to the lower Yangtze region. Thereafter, the Sui state crumbled with amazing swiftness. Rebellion broke out all over the country, and in 618 Emperor Yang was mur-

dered. Perhaps the two rulers of the dynasty had tried to achieve too much too soon. Certainly the centrifugal forces, strengthened through the long period of division, could not be quickly curbed, and asserted themselves again when the new central government showed signs of weakness.

The victors of the civil war were the Li, a noble Chinese family from the northwest, who may have had some barbarian ancestors. An important factor in their success was a temporary alliance with the Eastern Turks. In 618, Li Yuan, then in his early fifties, was enthroned as the first emperor of the T'ang dynasty, with Ch'ang-an as his capital. His rivals were defeated in a number of brief campaigns, lasting until 623. Meanwhile, the alliance with the Eastern Turks faltered, and the Turks invaded China in 622 and 624.

The first emperor of T'ang had named the eldest of his three sons heir apparent. This provoked the middle son, Li Shih-min, to ambush and kill his brothers on July 2, 626. He then forced his father to abdicate, and took the throne himself. Emperor T'ai-tsung, as he is known in history, represents a typical historiographical problem. While not the first emperor of T'ang, he is depicted as the actual founder of the dynasty, the man who received the Mandate. The dynastic historians focus on him from the beginning of the rebellion and play down the roles of his father and brothers. T'ai-tsung's murder of his brothers and dethronement of his father were justified by distorting history and by portraying him as the only talented member of his family, a superior military genius and leader of men. This is not to say that T'ai-tsung was a bad ruler. He was forceful and intelligent, and had the ability to select competent assistants. He also adopted a policy of religious tolerance, which remained generally characteristic for the T'ang until the ninth century. When T'ai-tsung died in 649 and left a stable empire to his son Kao-tsung, the only danger to his house came from a woman.

One of T'ai-tsung's harem ladies, named Wu, became a concubine of the new emperor in 650, and managed to have herself appointed empress five years later. Through intrigue, strength of will, and, where necessary, murder, the Empress Wu made herself the dominating figure at the court. When Kao-tsung died at the end of 683, a grown son of hers succeeded to the throne. But, because he showed signs of independence, she demoted him within two months and replaced him with her youngest son. This worthy did not interfere in matters of state, and in 690 officially abdicated in favor of his mother. She ascended the throne in her own right, and proclaimed the Chou dynasty. Since the dynastic historians were biased against the Empress Wu, there is the usual difficulty of obtaining a balanced view. So much is certain, that, while vindictive, cruel, and power-hungry, she also was a great monarch. Her reign came to an end in early 705, when, aged eighty and feeble, she was overthrown and her eldest son



reinstated. She died before the end of that year. With her grandson Hsüan-tsung, who reigned from 713 to 755, the T'ang dynasty reached its cultural zenith, and also began its steep political decline.

The first half of the T'ang dynasty was a period of vigorous foreign involvement. T'ai-tsung had resumed the campaigns against Koguryō, and his son finally destroyed this state in 668. But within a decade the Chinese were expelled, and Korea was united under the Silla dynasty, which remained in power until 935. Beyond Korea, the Chinese had been aware of the Japanese islands and their inhabitants at least since Former Han times, and the first official Japanese embassy had reached China in A.D. 57. During T'ang, Japan received profound cultural impulses from China, both directly by sea from the Yangtze delta and by diffusion via Korea.

Whereas China had achieved little in the Korean wars, it was triumphant in Central Asia. After a new raid of the Eastern Turks, the Chinese took the offensive, captured the Turkish ruler in 630, and reduced his nation, comprising the area of present Inner and Outer Mongolia, to vassal status. The Eastern Turks rallied at the end of the seventh century, but peace was restored in 725. Two decades later, in 744, the Eastern Turkish empire was broken up by the Uighurs, another Turkish-speaking people, who had become allies of China. The power of the Uighurs lasted until 840, when they were defeated by still another Turkish tribe, the Kirghiz.

The Western Turkish empire, mainly comprising West Turkestan, Dzungaria, and the Tarim Basin, posed a more distant threat. China contested the Tarim Basin, and regained it in campaigns lasting from 640 to 648. On the insistence of the energetic Empress Wu, Chinese armies then invaded West Turkestan in 656, the Turkish ruler was taken prisoner, and his empire ceased to exist. West Turkestan became what amounted to a Chinese protectorate.

This was the peak of Chinese expansion in Central Asia, but soon the situation was dramatically changed with the appearance of the Arabs. Muhammad's death in 632 had not halted the Muslim conquests. Ctesiphon, the residence of the Sassanid kings on the Tigris, was conquered in 637, a Sassanid prince reached Ch'ang-an as a refugee in 674. From 705 onward, the Arab warrior Khotaiba ibn Muslim gradually gained possession of West Turkestan. After his death in 715, although China regained a foothold through diplomatic means, this did not prevent the Arabs from garrisoning Bukhara and Samarkand. If the Chinese wished to maintain their presence in West Turkestan, a military clash was unavoidable. It came in 751 at the Talas River, not far from present Tashkent. The Arabs won with the help of the Karluks, a Turkish-speaking tribe, who during the battle made a surprise attack on the Chinese from the rear. With this defeat, China lost its position in West Turkestan forever. Among the Chinese prisoners taken by the Arabs at the Talas River were men who knew how to make paper—an art discovered in China at least 650 years earlier. As an unexpected by-product of the battle, paper manufacture spread to Samarkand and Baghdad, was from there carried to Damascus, Cairo, and Morocco, and entered Europe through Italy and Spain.

Tibet was unified early in the seventh century, and its king Srong-bcan-gsam-po sent an embassy to China in 641 to ask for a Chinese princess in marriage. This was arranged, and according to Chinese tradition the princess did much to civilize the uncouth Tibetans. Actually, Tibet's advance was due less to a princess' influence than to the general diffusion of the Indian and Chinese cultures. Although the Tibetans were converted to Buddhism at this time, their warlike spirits were not yet dampened. From 670 to 821, they repeatedly fought the Chinese and asserted themselves in the western Tarim Basin. They even temporarily took and looted Ch'ang-an in 763. The Arabs also suffered under the Tibetans, so that the caliph Harun al-Rashid in 798 offered China military cooperation. But the threat receded, no joint action took place, and the Tibetans made peace with China in 821. During the following centuries, their nation mellowed into a theocracy and lost its belligerence.

In their heyday of foreign involvement, the Chinese also intervened in northern India. An ambassador spent two years at King Harṣa's court

during the early 640's. Returning on a second mission in 647, he found that Harsa had just died without an heir, and that a certain Aryuna had made himself the ruler. On Aryuna's order, the Chinese delegation was massacred. The ambassador succeeded in escaping, raised troops in Nepal, arrested Aryuna, and brought him as a prisoner to Ch'ang-an. One hundred years later, in 747, Chinese troops crossed the Pamir Mountains and made a brief appearance in northern India.

In the south, China occupied the Red River delta in Indochina throughout T'ang times. Only toward the southwest, in Yunnan and Kweichow, the Chinese met with utter failure. The independent state of Nan-chao continued to flourish in that region and repelled with ease all Chinese invasions.

Meanwhile, Chinese and foreigners met peacefully in the great port of Canton and in other places on the southeast coast. Shipping was primarily in the hands of Arabs and Persians. Jews are known to have been among the traders in Canton. Arab sources report that in the ninth century a voyage from Persia to China took 130 to 140 days. The foreign merchants were provided with special quarters in Canton, and had considerable freedom in governing themselves. A temporary setback for overseas trade came in 879, when Canton was taken and looted by a rebel, and many foreigners lost their lives. The Arabs used this interval for developing a trade route to Japan and Korea.

The vigor of early T'ang times sprang not only from the ambitions of energetic rulers, but also from the smooth functioning of the bureaucratic institutions, which followed the traditional pattern. Three offices formed the chief organs of the central government: the Imperial Secretariat in charge of making policy, the Imperial Chancellery which reviewed it, and the Secretariat of State Affairs which implemented it. The Six Ministries were concerned with personnel, revenue, rites, war, justice, and public works; the Nine Offices had similar administrative duties. The Board of Censors scrutinized the performance of the civil servants and, in bursts of courage, even of the emperor himself. The provincial administration was very similar to that of Sui and Han times.

The examination system had been reintroduced by Sui and was improved by T'ang. A candidate for office prepared himself by studying with a tutor, in the public school of his local district, or at the Imperial Academy in the capital. He then enrolled for an examination in his chosen field, such as literature, law, or mathematics. If he was successful, he received a title which corresponded to the type of his examination. The most respected among these titles was that of Presented Scholar, and all who received it were, as implied by the wording, introduced to the emperor. Theirs was a literary degree, since knowledge of the Confucian

classics was valued more highly than specialism in practical subjects. T'ang is therefore, after the Han, the second great period of Confucian exegesis, and the approved version of the classics was finally engraved on stone tablets in 839. To receive an official post, however, the degree was not enough. The candidate had to pass a further placement test. Once he was in office, advancement depended on additional examinations and merit ratings. The emperor's relatives, holders of noble and honorific titles, and sons of high officials did not need to earn the scholarly degrees, and could directly take the placement tests. While tensions existed between the degree holders and this privileged group, the majority of the career officials had entered the bureaucracy through the examination system. The Empress Wu contributed much to that development, since, from political motives, she favored degree holders.

In agriculture, the so-called equal field system, whose origins go back to earlier times, was tried and failed. It was designed to grant 100 *mou* (about 13.7 acres) of land to each male at the age of twenty-one. Unless he died earlier, 80 *mou* reverted to the state when he reached sixty. The remainder became his permanent property. Smaller lots were given to widows, invalids, and similar distressed categories. Officials received considerably larger units, known as service portions, as long as they were employed by the government. In theory, complete equity was possible through the routine and continuous redistribution of land; in fact, supply and demand were out of step. Although the population total did not grow during at least the first half of the T'ang dynasty, regional proportions kept changing through a great migration from north to central and southern China. In areas of dense or, through the influx of migrants, sharply increasing population, a continuous public redistribution of land was technically infeasible. In spite of this, the poll tax remained geared to the ideal, though largely fictitious, system of equal land allotment. The increasing disorder in tax collection reached the point where a reform became necessary. In 780, the Double Tax was introduced, which was levied twice each year in the sixth and eleventh months. It was a land tax, proportionate to the area held by each owner. Henceforth, the government lost interest in the size of holdings. Since large estates paid large taxes, there was no longer any good fiscal reason to oppose their formation. This may have contributed to the growth of landlordism in China.

As in earlier periods, the merchants were discriminated against, and the government sought to monopolize the production and sale of important commodities, particularly salt, iron, liquor, and tea. Tea became a truly national Chinese drink only in T'ang times. It was characteristic of the government's attitude toward commerce that it tried to gain control of the tea trade as soon as this promised to become a major source of income.

T'ang civilization reached its height in the reign of the art-loving

Emperor Hsuan-tsung (713–755), who was a great patron of poetry and painting, of literature, theater, and scholarship. But he was unprepared for the political convulsion which cost him his throne. A development had taken place in the military field, whereby professional troops had gradually supplanted the militia of earlier times. Border territories were placed under Regional Commanders, who controlled both the military defense and the civilian administration, and therefore possessed exceptional power. One of these men, An Lu-shan, revolted in 755 at the northeastern frontier, conquered Lo-yang and Ch'ang-an, and proclaimed himself emperor. Hsuan-tsung fled and abdicated in favor of his son. The rebellion continued for several years, and was not fully suppressed until 763. Of crucial importance for the T'ang government was the assistance of the Uighurs, who exacted their reward, including a daughter of the emperor.

It is sometimes asserted, owing to a misunderstanding of the Chinese statistics, that the bloodletting of the civil war reduced China's population by two-thirds or more, but that was not the case. The population hovered around the 50 million level from Han to T'ang, without massive changes. A major factor preventing population growth was probably infanticide. Sons were preferred and daughters an economic liability. The abandoning of newborn girls served therefore as a check. It is only from the end of T'ang that China's steady population increase began.

While the T'ang nominally survived until 907, power shifted from the central government to hereditary Regional Commanders, most of whom had no national ambitions. The dynasty finally collapsed in another civil war, which increased in violence from 874, and in which the last two emperors were murdered.

The empire of China's powerful and demanding allies, the Uighurs, had crumbled sixty-seven years earlier, and that event had brought important religious repercussions. Previously, the T'ang dynasty had been a period of relative religious tolerance. Buddhism had flourished, and other religions had benefited also. The first Zoroastrian temple was built in Ch'ang-an in 621, and the first Nestorian Christian missionary had reached that city in 635. Manicheism came to China in 694, and received preferential treatment for good tactical reasons: the Uighurs converted to it, and it was important not to affront these allies. The defeat of the Uighurs by the Kirghiz in 840 changed that situation. Manicheism immediately came under attack in China, and religious persecutions began. They lasted from 841 to 845, and were through Taoist influence extended to other foreign religions. Manicheism, Nestorianism, and Zoroastrianism were wiped out. Buddhism, which had met with earlier setbacks in 446 and 574, survived, but suffered enormous economic losses. The great wealth of its temples and monasteries was confiscated, shrines were closed, and monks and nuns were secularized. Buddhism never fully recovered, and degenerated spirit-

ually during the following centuries Islam, which still had few followers in China, was apparently unaffected by the persecution. It was only later that Islam became a great religious force in the western border regions.

Half a century was to pass before the empire was unified once more. Five successive dynasties ruled the north. Ten other states appeared in the rest of China, excluding Nan-chao in the southwest. The dynastic historians, obsessed with the Mandate of Heaven, considered the northern dynasties as legitimate, and this brief period of Chinese history is therefore known as that of the Five Dynasties. It was another time of turmoil, yet it was also an era of great cultural activity, in which, among other achievements, printing came of age. The technique of block printing seems to have been developed by the Buddhists and Taoists, but much of its early history remains obscure. The oldest printed texts discovered so far are Buddhist sutras. During the Five Dynasties, the Confucian classics were printed for the first time, and the technique became respectable. Movable type was invented soon thereafter, but block printing was cheaper and continued to be the common method.

The empire was reunited by the Chinese general Chao K'uang-yin (d. 976), who established the Northern Sung dynasty (960–1126), and chose K'ai-feng on the Grand Canal as his capital. His dynasty did not have the military vigor of a T'ang or Han, and was early forced to make territorial concessions. Toward the end of T'ang, the Mongolian-speaking Khitan had founded a large Central Asian state, comprising Manchuria, Inner Mongolia, and the greater part of Outer Mongolia. Its rulers called themselves emperors from 907, and adopted the name of Liao for their dynasty in 947. A decade earlier, in 938, the Khitan had gained possession of northern Hopei and northern Shansi, and they retained these areas as long as their empire lasted. The Sung were not only unable to reconquer the lost territories, but even had to pay annual tribute to Liao from 1004. Korea, since 935 under the Koryŏ dynasty, was similarly reduced to a tributary of the Liao.

In the northwest, China was also retreating. The Tibetan Hsi-hsia dynasty made itself master of the Kansu corridor and the Ordos Region, threw off Chinese rule, and defeated the Sung armies. China agreed in a peace treaty of 1044 to pay tribute to Hsi-hsia as well. In the south, Sung had lost the Red River delta, where Annam emerged as an independent state from the tenth century onward. In the southwest, the border against Nan-chao remained unchanged.

Although Sung China was smaller than the T'ang state, its population was much larger, perhaps around 100 million by the early twelfth century.



One factor favoring population growth was the introduction in the eleventh century of early-ripening rice from Indochina. This made two rice harvests possible each year, feeding larger numbers of people and thereby reducing the need for infanticide.

The central government was reorganized in a form differing slightly from the T'ang. A Council of State became the important policy-making and executive body under the emperor, assisted by a bureau of scholars and a number of agencies including the censorate. Below the Council of State were the Secretariat-Chancellery in charge of personnel and law, the Finance Commission, and the Bureau of Military Affairs. In the local administration, the provinces were no longer divided into commanderies, but into prefectures and subprefectures, each consisting of a varying number of districts.

The examination system was still evolving, and candidates now had to pass three consecutive levels of tests. The first hurdle was an examination given by either the local prefectures, the government schools in the provinces, or the Imperial Academy in K'ai-feng. Successful candidates proceeded to a more advanced examination in the capital. The third stage was an examination conducted by the palace. Among the final degrees, that of Presented Scholar remained the most respected. The better an examinee had done, the more important the office he received. Sons of high officials continued to be a privileged group, and could be directly nominated for office. Sale of office persisted, but on a limited scale and offering little hope for advancement.

In the military field, the founder of Sung had decided against reviving the militia. He relied on a professional standing army, but made sure that the provincial detachments were not large enough to endanger the dynasty. K'ai-feng was protected by special units. Cavalry was neglected.

Northern Sung witnessed an unprecedented expansion in industry and commerce, which led to a coin shortage and the world's first paper currency. Experiments with so-called Flying Cash had been made as early as 811, in T'ang times. The government had then issued money drafts which could be used in transactions and eventually exchanged for cash. During Sung, both the government and private banks emitted drafts and certificates. This trade was monopolized by the government in 1024, and the various notes were converted into paper currency.

Because of growing demands particularly by agriculture, the government arsenals, and shipbuilding, the output of pig iron increased greatly during Northern Sung, which in turn increased the demand for fuel used in iron smelting. Since charcoal was not available in sufficient quantities, mineral coal became more and more a substitute. Mineral coal had been used on a limited scale from at least the fourth century A.D.; with the eleventh century, it became the most important fuel in China. Commerce also expanded; porcelain manufacture flourished; the tea trade increased; cotton came into general use. Yet, although the merchants organized themselves in trade associations and guilds, they remained a functionally weak middle class. They suffered under the government's confiscatory policy of monopolizing large profitable enterprises through a licensing system, as it did with the trade in tea, salt, and agricultural implements. Moreover, merchants were held in low esteem by the Confucian state. The Chinese ideal remained the well-bred official, not the successful businessman, and the highest ambition of even the merchants themselves was to see their descendants absorbed into the scholar-gentry.

Among the many new fashions developing in Sung China, only two will be mentioned here: chairs were adopted, and foot-binding became popular.

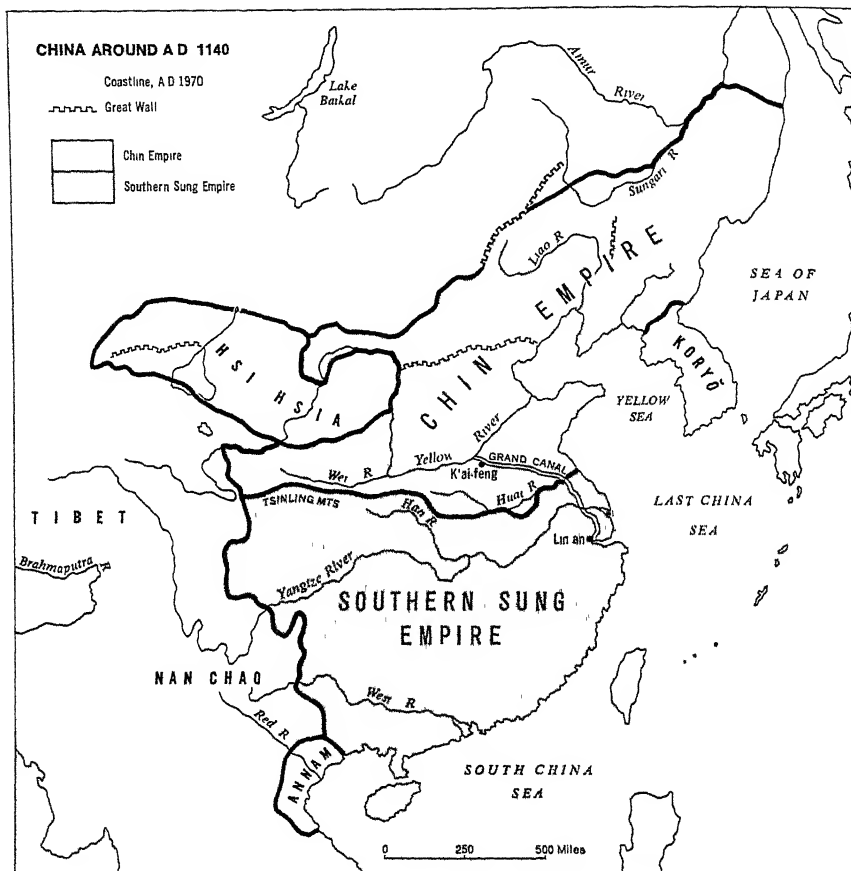
The latter has been interpreted as marking a decline in the status of women, but that is probably a misconception. Foot-binding was a vogue, to which the women did not object.

Gradually, the economic position of the government worsened, owing to increasing expenses for the civil bureaucracy and military defense. A reform party appeared among the officials, led by Wang An-shih (d. 1086), who was a slovenly but brilliant man, unorthodox in behavior and thought. His program was not all of his own design and included ideas which had been tried before in Chinese history. He was opposed by a conservative party, led by a number of famous and respected statesmen. In 1069, Wang An-shih became chief minister, and set out to rationalize government and finance. He abolished superfluous posts in the bureaucracy and modernized the examination curriculum. He changed the basis of the land tax, so that it was assessed not only on the size of each holding but also on the productivity of the soil. He commuted corvée into a money payment. He established government pawnshops which offered the peasants loans at the relatively low rate of 20 per cent. To stabilize the market, he had the government buy basic commodities when prices were low and sell them when prices were high, a method which had been tried as early as Han times. He also once more replaced professional soldiers with a militia, and attempted to set up a cavalry.

It is difficult to know how successful the reforms were, and how much they met with passive resistance and bureaucratic inertia. Wang An-shih retired himself in 1076, but his party remained in power until 1086. The conservatives dominated the government from 1086 to 1094. For most of the time between 1094 and 1126, the reformers were again in control, but they were no longer led by a man of Wang An-shih's caliber, and in the violent reaction to the military disaster of 1126, they were swept away.

A menacing new power had appeared in the north. The Jurchen, Tungusic-speaking tribes in Central Manchuria who were ancestors of the Manchus, had risen against their erstwhile Khitan masters in 1114, had proclaimed the Chin dynasty in the following year, and, aided by Sung armies, had destroyed the Liao empire in 1125. The victors immediately fell out with each other, and the Sung discovered that their new neighbors were infinitely more belligerent than the Khitan had been. In 1126 the Jurchen took the Sung capital, K'ai-feng, looted it, and carried off the emperor and his father. Neither ever saw China again.

Pursued by the Jurchen, the Sung forces withdrew southward, and the following period is therefore known as the Southern Sung dynasty (1127–1279). Lin-an, the present-day Hang-chou, became the capital in 1135. It was situated in Chekiang, in the midst of China's richest agricultural region, and grew into what was then the most splendid city in the world. It



had a population of about a million and a half, and Marco Polo described it later as the world's largest and most beautiful city. The war dragged on inconclusively until 1141, when the border between Chin and Southern Sung was drawn along the Tsinling Mountains and the Huai River. Sung also agreed to pay an annual tribute. Except for the Hsi-hsia state in the northwest, the Chin empire controlled all of northern China and Manchuria. Mongolia did not belong to the Chin, and soon was to bring forth new and even more formidable conquerors.

The defeat by the Jurchen was a great blow to Chinese pride, but it was not an economic disaster. While the promising industrial development was brought to a halt, the most productive agricultural area was in the lower Yangtze Valley. In every field, save brute military strength, Southern Sung

was superior to Chin, so that the loss of northern China meant little to the average southerner.

It was a time of booming maritime trade, and this was no longer in the hands of foreigners. The Chinese had learned to build superior ships, which called at ports as far away as India's west coast. The magnetic compass may have been discovered in China during the Han dynasty, and the floating compass needle had been known since at least the fourth century A.D. The instrument had not been needed in the predominantly coastal and inland shipping of the earlier period, but with the maritime expansion of Sung times it seems to have become standard equipment on seagoing vessels. In the West, there is no record of the magnetic compass until 1190, so that the invention may well have spread from China via the Middle East to Europe. This possibility is strengthened by the fact that Arabs during the thirteenth century used a floating compass needle shaped like a fish, just as the Chinese did before them.

The Sung scholars interested themselves in many other fields of knowledge, such as archaeology, history, agriculture, mathematics, geometry, geography, cartography, astronomy, and forensic medicine. The Chinese mathematicians of this time may have been the most advanced in the world. Sung was also a period when the experience of the past was collected, categorized, and preserved in great encyclopedic works.

In the field of Confucian thought, there were the same attempts to systematize and codify. During the Han dynasty, Confucianism had adapted itself to become a practical tool of government. After a period of decline, it had asserted itself again in T'ang times, and had been reinforced by the exegetic studies of the classical commentators. Sung was the last great period of adjustment. The Neo-Confucian thinkers, influenced by Taoism and Buddhism, attempted to harmonize the Confucian classics into a homogeneous whole, and to provide Confucianism with a metaphysical superstructure which so far had been lacking. To do so, they had to re-interpret the classics, to read much into them which was not there, and to explain away all contradictions.

Neo-Confucianism split into two major branches, the Rationalistic and the Idealistic schools. The first of these received its final form through Chu Hsi (1130-1200). He distinguished between principle and matter. All matter, whether animate or inanimate, has its own principle without which it cannot exist. The invention of a boat is no more than the material expression of the already existing principle. All principles are part of an eternal oneness, which is the Supreme Ultimate. The Supreme Ultimate is totally present in each material object, but only the principle pertaining to that particular object is able to manifest itself. The rest is kept out by the impurity of matter. This concept made it possible to reconcile earlier

doubts about the nature of man. Goodness and evil depend on each individual's degree of purity. The purpose of education is to reduce impurity. Self-cultivation and a proper understanding of the classics must therefore be more conducive to this goal than technical specialization. All men together form society which has its own principle called the Way. Good government means to conform to the Way.

The most famous exponent of the Idealistic School, Wang Yang-ming, who lived much later (1472–1529), maintained that principle and matter are a single entity, and that sagehood is achieved through intuitive knowledge. But it was Chu Hsi's interpretation which became orthodox and unshakable in the field of education. His and his school's understanding of the classics came to form the basic curriculum hammered into the heads of all candidates for office. This was expected to foster the high moral character needed for governing and guiding the people, yet it also encouraged conformity and penalized independence of mind.

For Further Reading

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28 The Chinese Empire: Foreign Rulers and National Restoration

One of the greatest conquerors the world has known was born about 1167 as the son of a minor Mongolian chief and given the name Temüjin. His tribe was dominated by the powerful Tatars, who had their grazing grounds in what now is eastern Mongolia. Tatar, in the West corrupted to Tartar, was only gradually replaced by Mongol as a general term for all people belonging to that particular language group. The change in appellation was entirely due to the fact that Temüjin was a Mongol. During years of tribal fighting, he subdued the Tatars, Kereits, Orats, and Naimans, and became the master of the Mongolian-speaking people. His supremacy was confirmed in 1206, when the Mongolian diet recognized him as Chinggis Khan, which may mean Universal Ruler.

- A D c. 1167-1227 Chinggis Khan
- 1217 Mongols conquer Tarim Basin
 - 1221 Mongols conquer West Turkestan and Afghanistan
 - 1222 Chinggis Khan raids India
 - 1227 Mongols conquer Hsi-hsia
 - 1229-1241 Ögodei Great Khan
 - 1234 Mongols conquer Chin empire
 - 1238 Mongols take Moscow
 - 1240 Mongols take Kiev
 - 1241 Mongol victories at Liegnitz (Silesia) and Mohi (Hungary)
 - 1251-1259 Mongke Great Khan
 - 1252 Mongols conquer Nan-chao and eastern Tibet
 - 1258 Mongols take Baghdad, conquer Korea
 - 1260-1294 Khubilai Great Khan
 - 1274 Mongols raid Kyūshū
 - 1275-1292 Marco Polo in China
 - 1279 Mongols conquer Southern Sung
 - 1280-1367 Yüan dynasty
 - 1281 Unsuccessful Mongol invasion of Kyūshū
 - 1293 Unsuccessful Mongol invasion of Java
 - 1368-1644 Ming dynasty
 - 1336-1405 Timur (Tamerlane)
 - 1424 Death of Yung-lo Emperor
 - 1405-1433 Voyages of Cheng Ho
 - 1419 Death of Tsong-kha-pa
 - 1421 Peking capital of China
 - 1428 Annam independent
 - 1449 Oirats raid China
 - 1514 Coming of the Westerners
 - 1522 Tax reform
 - 1550 Tatars raid China
 - 1557 Portuguese gain possession of Macao
 - 1607 Peace between China and Japan
 - 1618 Outbreak of fighting between Manchus and China
 - 1644 Suicide of last Ming emperor; Manchus enter Peking

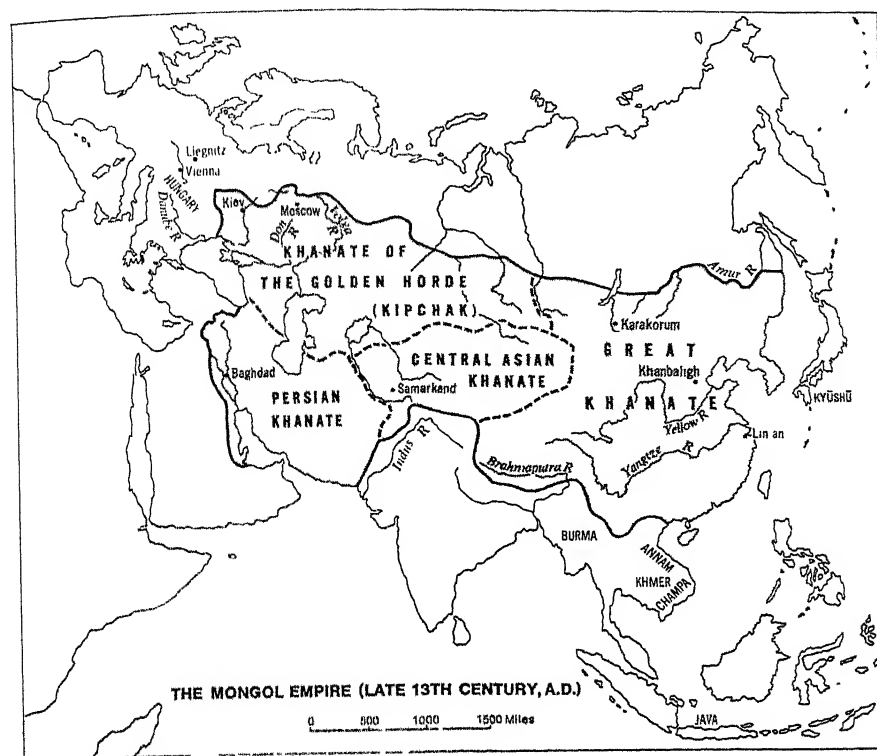
Chinggis Khan continued his intensive campaigns to establish a great Mongolian empire. Hsi-hsia submitted in 1209. Chin was invaded in 1211, but the Mongols suspended this attack and shifted their attention westward. They conquered the Tarim Basin and half of Turkestan in 1217. By 1221, the remainder of West Turkestan, Afghanistan, and part of Persia were in their hands. The next year, Chinggis Khan personally conducted a raid into northern India. Other forces invaded Russia in 1223. An uprising of Hsi-hsia in 1224 persuaded Chinggis Khan to return from West Asia, but he died in 1227, shortly before the final defeat of that state. His son Ögödei became Great Khan in 1229, and made Karakorum the capital of the Mongolian empire.

The Mongols began their final attack on Chin in 1232 and, with ill-advised support from the Southern Sung, completed it in 1234. Then they struck again toward the west, took Moscow in 1238 and Kiev in 1240. There followed the famous two-pronged raid into Europe, with the stunning victories at Liegnitz in Silesia and at Mohi in Hungary, both in April, 1241. Mongolian cavalry penetrated to Vienna and the Adriatic, whereupon the armies withdrew as suddenly as they had come. One reason may have been that no territorial conquests had been intended, another that the struggle over the succession after Great Khan Ögödei's death in December, 1241, required the presence of the high nobles in Karakorum. The political situation remained fluid for a decade, in the course of which the Mongols avoided major military involvement.

The enthronement of Möngke, son of Ögödei's younger brother, in 1251 signaled a renewal of vigorous expansion. In 1252, the Mongols subjugated the state of Nan-chao in southwest China, and thereafter took eastern Tibet. The final conquest of Persia came in the following year. In 1258, the Mongols destroyed the Abassid Caliphate of Baghdad, and during the same year brought Korea to heel.

When Great Khan Möngke suddenly died in 1259, two of his brothers competed for the throne. Khubilai won and was recognized as Great Khan from 1264. He shifted his capital from Karakorum to Khanbaligh (City of the Khan), the future Peking. Although Khubilai does not seem to have known Chinese, he chose in 1271 the Chinese name of Yüan for his dynasty. His forces launched an attack on Southern Sung, took its capital in 1276, and then swiftly overpowered the rest of China. A remnant of the Sung navy, with the last child emperor on board one of the ships, was sunk in 1279.

During the Chinese wars, a variety of new weapons was brought into action, including firearms. Gunpowder had been used for military purposes in China since the tenth century, and may have been discovered much earlier. The Sung forces employed fire arrows and explosive grenades, and



they experimented with land mines, poison gas projectiles, and smoke screens, all of which utilized gunpowder in various ways. Cannons began to replace catapults in the thirteenth century. Knowledge of gunpowder spread to the Jurchen and Mongols, who soon were hurling projectiles at their inventors and each other. Whether the appearance of gunpowder in Europe during the fourteenth century is due to independent discovery or diffusion from China remains an open question.

The Yüan, officially dated 1280–1367 in China, was the first foreign dynasty to govern the entire nation. But Khubilai was not only emperor of China; he was also Great Khan of a huge empire, in which China merely formed a part. This Mongolian empire was divided into khanates, each ruled by a descendant of Chinggis Khan. The Great Khanate comprised Mongolia, Manchuria, Korea, China, and the major part of Tibet. The Central Asian Khanate, later divided among two dynasties, consisted of the Tarim Basin, Dzungaria, West Turkestan east of the Amu Darya, and eastern Afghanistan. The Persian Khanate included Persia, Mesopotamia, West Turkestan west of the Amu Darya, and western Afghanistan. The

Khanate of the Golden Horde, also called the Khanate of Kipchak, possessed southern Russia and Kazakhstan. It divided in 1255 into the Golden Horde of southern Russia, and the White Horde of Kazakhstan, but was reunited in 1378.

The Mongolian dynasties of the various khanates went their separate ways, adjusting to local civilizations, and ruling their domains independently. Yet despite developing tensions, they remained in touch with one another, and loosely recognized the Great Khan as their sovereign. Messengers and merchants, technicians and craftsmen, office seekers and adventurers, moved freely through the vast empire. European powers sent envoys, and many Westerners served in the Mongolian armies through coercion or choice. It was a time of unprecedented cultural cross-fertilization.

At first, the Mongols had simply exploited their Chinese possessions, but Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai (1189-1243), a Khitan descending from the founder of the Liao dynasty, succeeded in moderating that policy. He had become an adviser of Chinggis Khan in 1218, and retained influence over Ögödei until 1239. Owing to his efforts, the Chinese civil service was partially revived, and taxes were collected in an orderly fashion. It was only after West and Central Asian merchants offered the Mongols a larger income through tax farming that Yeh-lü Ch'u-ts'ai lost the confidence of his ruler. When Khubilai had become Great Khan and conquered all of China, he recognized that this big and populous country could not be ruled without the cooperation of its inhabitants. Early in his reign, he reintroduced the Chinese bureaucracy, and one of his successors restored the examination system in 1315. Nevertheless, it was not easy for the Chinese intelligentsia to be appointed to the higher posts. Southerners were discriminated against, because they had surrendered last. While northerners were treated better, they had to compete not only with their Mongolian masters but also with other foreigners. Khubilai did not hesitate to employ officials from the far reaches of the world if they were useful to him. This cosmopolitan policy not only excluded Chinese from coveted posts, it also insulted their Sinocentric sensibilities.

Commerce flourished, although the Mongols attempted to monopolize the production and sale of valuable staples in accord with Chinese practice. Foreign trade was mainly in the hands of Central Asian Muslims, who entered into partnership with Mongols. A national paper currency was introduced. To supply Khanbaligh with grain and other commodities from the key economic area at the lower Yangtze, the Mongols constructed a new Grand Canal system, and also experimented with coastal shipping.

The careful attention which Khubilai gave to the administration of his empire did not keep him from further, though unsuccessful, military ven-

tures. On the Asian continent, campaigns against Burma, Annam, and Annam's southern neighbor Champa led to no permanent conquests. Neither did a Mongolian embassy to the Khmer kingdom, shortly after Khubilai's death in 1294, leave any lasting results except for an invaluable account by a Chinese participant. He vividly described Angkor Thom and Angkor Wat, which today are towering ruins, but then teemed with life. Khubilai's maritime expeditions fared even worse. When the Japanese completely ignored the Great Khan, Kyūshū was raided by an armada in 1274, and formally invaded in 1281. These engagements were failures and not repeated. A naval attack on Java also came to nothing. Troops were actually landed in 1293, but they could not exploit their early victories and had to be reembarked.

The Mongols showed considerable tolerance in religious matters, and the Buddhist monasteries went through a period of economic recovery. Khubilai favored Buddhism, and was personally inclined toward Tibetan Lamaism. Nestorianism enjoyed its final flourishing. While it had disappeared from China after the persecutions of 841–845, it had been kept alive among some of the Central Asian tribes. Several members of Chinggis Khan's house were Nestorian Christians, such as Ögödei's principal wife, and Khubilai's mother. With the victory of the Mongols, Nestorianism reentered China. The church became so strong that a chain of archbishoprics and bishoprics stretched from Samarkand to Khanbaligh, and that it could insist on rebaptizing Christian prisoners of war before admitting them to services.

Diplomatic contacts between West and East were lively. The European envoys were almost exclusively Franciscan friars, eager to proselytize for the Roman Catholic Church. Some of them left important accounts. In 1245, Pope Innocent IV dispatched the Italian Franciscan John of Plano Carpini, accompanied by the Polish friar Benedict, to call on the Great Khan. Four years later, King Louis IX of France joined with the papal legate in sending the French Dominican André de Longjumeau to Karakorum. The king also supported the Flemish Franciscan William of Rubruck, an astute observer, who visited in Karakorum from 1253 to 1254 and later described the international life in the Mongolian capital. In contrast to these envoys, the Italian Franciscan John of Monte Corvino was more missionary than diplomat. He was sent out by Pope Nicholas IV in 1289, reached Khanbaligh in the middle of the 1290's after stops in Persia and India, and remained there until his death sometime between 1328 and 1332. He claims in his letters to have been well received, to have made thousands of converts, and to have translated the New Testament into Mongolian. The Pope made him an archbishop in 1307. Another Italian Franciscan, Odoric of Pordenone, was also active in Khanbaligh for three

years during the late 1320's. His countryman, the Franciscan John of Marignolli, was sent by Pope Benedict XII from Avignon in 1338, arrived in Khanbaligh in 1342, presented a large western horse, and then stayed as a missionary until 1345. The horse created a deep impression at the court. Poems were written in its honor, such as the "Ode to the Heavenly Horse," and a court painter depicted the Great Khan riding on its back.

The achievements of these and other missionaries were short-lived. With the fall of the Yuan dynasty, Nestorianism was expelled from China forever. The Roman Catholic Church lost its foothold, and was able to return only at the end of the sixteenth century. Apart from Buddhism and Taoism, this left only one major religion, Islam, which was slowly gaining strength in Kansu and Yunnan.

While many clerics were able writers, Western merchants did not feel the need to relate their experiences. Their names and travels have mostly been forgotten—with one magnificent exception, the Venetian Marco Polo. He tells in his *Description of the World* how his father Niccolo and uncle Maffeo traveled to Bukhara in 1260. They joined a Mongolian embassy to the court of Great Khan Khubilai, who asked that they should fetch him one hundred learned Christians, and oil from the lamp of Jesus' grave in Jerusalem. The Polo brothers were back in Europe in 1269, and were detained there until 1271. They set out again with letters from Pope Gregory X and the requested oil, but not the learned Christians. This time, the teen-aged Marco accompanied them. Traveling through Central Asia, they arrived at Khubilai's court in 1275. Marco Polo gives a fascinating account of conditions in China. He claims to have entered the service of the Great Khan, and to have been governor of Yang-chou, north of the lower Yangtze, for three years. The Polos left China in 1292, after a stay of seventeen years. They went by sea to Persia in the bridal escort of one of Khubilai's daughters, and reached Venice in 1295. Soon thereafter, in 1298, Marco Polo was imprisoned by Genoa, and then dictated his account to a fellow prisoner. Marco Polo's contemporaries found it difficult to believe that he was truthful, and all doubts have not yet been stilled. While systematic and detailed, the work contains questionable statements and some peculiar omissions.

Many other foreigners flocked to the Great Khan's court. There were blond and blue-eyed men, perhaps Scandinavians, who told that their country had constant daylight, Hungarians, physicians from Greece, and at least one goldsmith from Paris. Others came from the Caucasus, Asia Minor, Arabia, even North Africa. Among the Muslims, the most famous traveler was Ibn Batuta (1304–1377/78) who visited China in the 1340's. Naturally, the traffic was not all from West to East. The Mongols sent envoys in the opposite direction, but little is known about their journeys. One who did

leave an account is the Nestorian monk Rabban Sauma, who was born in Khanbaligh about 1225. In 1287 and 1288, he visited Byzantium, Rome, Paris, and Gascony, and saw the kings of France and England.

It is not clear when civil war again broke out in China. The beginnings of uprisings can never be clearly dated in Chinese history. They had to reach a level of more than local impact before they began to worry the government and to provoke countermeasures on a national scale. That stage was reached in Mongolian-ruled China toward the middle of the fourteenth century. Assessing the reasons for the uprisings is also a problem, and the various steps leading to the expulsion of the Mongols have not yet been fully explored. Local conditions, including floods and famine, must have been important factors. With increasing power, the ambitions of the rebels grew. Some of the movements, such as the White Lotus Society, had religious overtones. Chu Yüan-chang, the eventual victor, was a peasant who briefly had been a Buddhist monk. He became a rebel leader, cooperated with the White Lotus Society, and may have belonged to it. By 1367, he controlled the lower Yangtze Valley and southeast China. In early 1368, he proclaimed himself emperor of the Ming dynasty. Khanbaligh fell that year. The northwest was conquered in 1369, Szechwan in 1371, and Yunnan in 1382. As of 1382, all of China proper was again ruled by a Chinese dynasty. But while the Mongols had been defeated, they had not been annihilated. They retreated to their homeland, from which, once more, they threatened the Chinese border.

Ming was the last Chinese dynasty before the Manchus and the fall of the empire, a period of maturity but also of declining vigor. The founder, customarily called the Hung-wu Emperor,* was a suspicious, harsh, but capable monarch, who dominated the government until his death in 1398. The only successor of comparable caliber was his fourth son, who in 1402 dethroned a nephew and became the Yung-lo Emperor (d. 1424). He transferred the capital in 1421 from Nanking to Peking, the former Khanbaligh. The later rulers were generally mediocre.

The Ming dynasty continued China's traditional bureaucratic institutions, with the ancient system of checks, balances, and overlapping duties. During the first years of the dynasty, the civil service was headed by the Imperial Secretariat, below which were the Six Ministries for personnel, revenue, rites, war, justice, and public works. Noted scholars performed literary tasks for the government. The important Office of Transmission channeled all correspondence to and from the central government. There

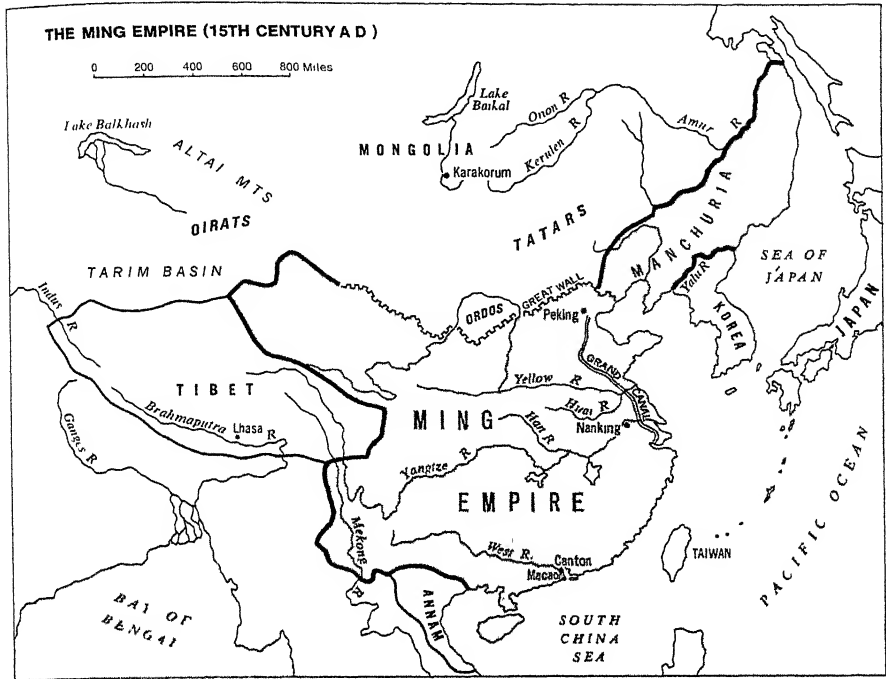
* Each Ming and Manchu emperor used a single era name, by which the years of his reign were dated. It has become practice to refer to the rulers by these names. The Hung-wu Emperor is consequently the emperor of the Hung-wu era.

were directorates for astronomy-astrology and imperial parks. The Imperial Academy supervised all schools, and was at the same time an institution of learning. This system was changed in 1380, when the Hung-wu Emperor took the important step of abolishing the Imperial Secretariat. He thereby crippled the career bureaucracy, or Outer Court, which lost its chief spokesmen and coordinators. As a substitute, the emperor created the Grand Secretariat, staffed by an irregular number of never more than six Grand Secretaries, who usually did not belong to the career bureaucracy. The Grand Secretariat was a device for concentrating power in the hands of the emperor, and therefore formed part of the Inner Court.

From 1428, the empire was divided into thirteen provinces, plus the two metropolitan areas of Peking and Nanking. Each province had its regular staff of officials which was supervised by sporadically dispatched governors from the capital. Occasionally, some provinces were combined under a viceroy. The provinces were divided into circuits, and these into prefectures, subprefectures, and districts. The districts numbered between 1,100 and 1,200. As in earlier times, district magistrates were the lowest officials appointed by the central government. The common people had considerable latitude in administering their own affairs. Influenced by a Sung system, an attempt was made to combine households into units of 110, led by the ten most prominent households. Within each unit, all households were collectively responsible for taxes and labor service.

The censorate was a separate branch of the bureaucracy, but it did not offer a separate career. Officials might pass through posts in both the civil service and the censorate. The function of the censorate was twofold, to impeach delinquent officials and, more dangerously, to remonstrate with unjust or negligent emperors. It was headed by the Chief Surveillance Office in the capital. Regional Inspectors were attached to the provinces and frontier zones. Offices of Scrutiny in the capital and the provinces, though independent from the censorate, had similar duties. In the appointment of censors, younger men were generally preferred, since it was thought that they would fulfill their obligations more diligently if their advancement depended on that performance. However, careers could also be ruined by too forthright criticism of the emperor or powerful officials. The censorate had an honorable tradition of integrity and courage, but the temptation always existed to impeach only the less influential culprits.

The military consisted of a small professional army, in which the positions of soldiers and lower-ranking officers were largely hereditary. Tests in military skills were also used for the recruitment of officers. The troops were stationed at the capital, in the provinces, and on the frontier. Auxiliaries were enrolled for border defense, and the Great Wall was reconstructed during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries



While the sons of high officials could still receive direct appointments, and while sale of offices continued, the majority of the officials entered the bureaucracy through the examination system. Candidates studied with private tutors, in the local schools, or at academies endowed by philanthropists. They then started the strenuous climb through progressively harder triannual examinations. First came the prefectural examinations, which led to the degree of Flourishing Talent, or Bachelor. The second step was an examination in the provincial capital. Those who passed received the degree of Recommended Man, or Licentiate. The last step was an examination in Peking. If successful, the candidate became a Presented Scholar, or Doctor. Study at the Imperial Academy was not a prerequisite, and, at least in the latter half of the dynasty, the majority of degree holders had not attended it. Licentiates might be appointed to office, but only Doctors could expect satisfactory careers.

The examinations were conducted with elaborate safeguards. Each candidate was isolated in an individual cell. A number was used instead of his name, and a scribe copied his paper to prevent recognition of handwriting. The weakness of the system lay not in its operation but in its subject matter. Neo-Confucianism was the state orthodoxy, from which no

departure was permitted. The official version of the classics was published in 1417. From 1487 onward, the further restraint was placed on the examinees that they had to express themselves in a set form of specified length, called the Eight-legged Essay. At the very time when China was approaching its confrontation with the West, the examination system ceased to reward independence and initiative. Yet, in spite of its faults, the system did recognize talent, and thereby contributed to social mobility. Few families remained influential for long, although certain provinces, as for instance Fukien, were intellectually dominant. To prevent regional injustice, a quota system was introduced.

The Ming dynasty continued the routine of collecting the land tax twice each year, graded according to size and productivity of the holdings. It imposed many other levies, as well as *corvée* for males aged sixteen to sixty. Since taxation had become overly complicated, and increasingly unfair, a reform was gradually carried out during the course of a century, beginning with 1522. The application of the reform varied, depending on local conditions, but in essence it simplified the procedure by combining the various taxes, and substituting silver for payments in kind. As this reform indicates, Ming was a period of expanding money economy. Paper currency was abolished early in the dynasty. Copper remained the standard for lower denominations, while silver increasingly came into use for the higher ones. This benefited commerce, although the government maintained the traditional hostile attitude to merchants. It tried to monopolize the production and sale of such items as salt, iron, and tea. It also set up state factories, generally staffed with hereditary artisans, and attempted to manufacture goods, from arms to porcelain. None of this prevented the growth of private business, which was aided by excellent communications. China's canal system was improved during Ming, and the Grand Canal was enlarged.

In the field of foreign relations, the Ming dynasty sought to fit other nations into its tribute system. In order to benefit from trade, even some distant states were willing to acquiesce in the Chinese view of the world, according to which all people had their appropriate and subordinate relationship to the Son of Heaven. But despite this ideal, China continued to suffer much grief from some of its neighbors.

At the very time when the Ming dynasty was founded, a threat had arisen from the West. The two parts of the Central Asian Khanate had been reunited after 1369 by Timur (1336–1405), known in Europe as Tamerlane. He claimed descent from Chinggis Khan, and set out to restore the Mongolian empire. In 1381, he conquered Persia, where the khanate had lapsed, and in 1395 he subjugated the Khanate of Kipchak. Three years later, he raided India and looted Delhi. Between 1400 and 1402, he

subdued Mesopotamia and Syria, and captured the sultan of Turkey. Timur then planned an attack on China, but died before he was ready to launch it. His state dissolved swiftly. All that was left of the once great Mongolian empire was Mongolia and the successor principalities of Kipchak.

The Hung-wu Emperor had taken the offensive against the Central Asian Mongols. In 1372, Chinese troops entered Karakorum. New victories followed in 1388 and 1390. The Yung-lo Emperor personally led five campaigns against the Mongols, and died on the last one in 1424. Although these efforts temporarily extended Chinese influence beyond the northern border, the Ming armies were unable to destroy the enemy or to take possession of the Ordos Region and the Tarim Basin. They had to fall back on the Great Wall. Fortunately for China, Mongolia was no longer united, but divided between the Oirats and Tatars. The former invaded China under Khan Esen in 1449 and captured the emperor himself. He was released in the following year, much to the displeasure of his brother who had succeeded him. A century later, the Tatar Khan Altan raided China for two decades from 1550 onward, and made peace only after considerable Chinese concessions.

The Jurchen of Manchuria, whose ancestors had founded the Chin dynasty (1115–1234), were fairly well controlled by the Chinese until the 1580's. In Korea, the Koryŏ dynasty, which had survived the period of Mongolian overlordship, was replaced in 1392 by the Yi dynasty. It deeply admired Confucianism and acknowledged tributary relationship to China.

Tibet, evolving further into a theocracy, also maintained tributary ties with China. A Buddhist reformer, Tsong-kha-pa (d. 1419), founded the Yellow Church, which gradually gained ascendancy over the Red Church. The successive Dalai Lamas, residing in Lhasa, managed through adroit politics to extend their temporal power over Tibet, whereas the Tashi or Panchen Lamas of the Tashi-lhunpo monastery at Shigatse gained greater influence in religious matters. Both dignitaries were claimed to be reincarnated divinities. From the 1570's onward, the Mongols were converted to the Yellow Church.

On its southern border, the Ming dynasty attempted the reconquest of Annam. Army upon army was dispatched, but only by 1414 was that state under Chinese control. Four years later, the Annamese rose again, and after a decade achieved independence under the Le dynasty (1428–1788). Henceforth, Ming China was content to keep tribute-trade relations with all its southern neighbors.

On the oceans, early Ming was a period of expansion, culminating in the seven voyages of the eunuch admiral Cheng Ho. Between 1405 and 1433, his fleets of up to sixty-two ships ranged as far away as Arabia and

East Africa. One purpose was to assert Chinese power. The rulers of Palembang on Sumatra, and of Ceylon, for example, were taken prisoner and brought to China. Another purpose may have been to satisfy the court's demand for exotic items. Cheng Ho brought back from Africa a minor zoo, including giraffes, ostriches, and zebras. But with Cheng Ho's death, Chinese naval displays on the high seas came to an end. Private Chinese merchants continued to go abroad, and in the sixteenth century were trading in Thailand, on the Malayan peninsula, Java, and the Philippines. Their numbers were not yet great, and those who stayed were undoubtedly absorbed into the local populations. Large-scale emigration from southeastern China, leading to permanent settlements abroad, started only with the Ch'ing dynasty.

China's relations with Japan veered between acrimony and amity. From the early fifteenth century until the middle of the sixteenth, Japan engaged in trade with China, masked as tribute. Japanese pirates, whose forces included Chinese, raided and traded simultaneously along the coast of southeast China. Although these pirates were derisively called *Wo-k'ou*, or Dwarf Bandits, the Ming government was unable to cope with them. In 1590, Hideyoshi became master of Japan, and two years later attacked Korea. Chinese troops were sent to the peninsula, but made a poor showing against the Japanese. Peace was finally restored in 1607 between China and the recently established Tokugawa shogunate.

The most important, though at that time least understood, event of the Ming was the coming of the Westerners. These were no longer the individual clerics, adventurers, and war prisoners of Mongol times, but a vanguard of the technologically superior Western civilization. The scene was being set for a fateful political and cultural clash three centuries later. Only thirteen years after Vasco da Gama had circumnavigated Africa, the Portuguese took Malacca in 1511. In 1514, they appeared off the coast of Canton, and an official squadron reached that city in 1517. The conduct of the Portuguese was such that they were expelled from China and remained excluded for decades, but in 1557 they managed to gain possession of Macao, and soon established a virtual monopoly on the China trade.

Meanwhile, a Portuguese navigator in the service of Spain, Fernão de Magalhães (Magellan) had reached the Philippines in 1521. Although he was killed in a local war, Spain took possession of the islands. The Dutch occupied the Indonesian archipelago from 1596. These nations strove to break the Portuguese trade monopoly of China. The Dutch tried to take Macao in 1622, while the British, relative latecomers in the Far East, attempted to force entrance to Canton in 1637. Both were repulsed by the Portuguese. As an alternative, the Dutch in 1624 established the fortress of Zeelandia on Taiwan, which island was not yet Chinese. The Spaniards

also founded a settlement on Taiwan two years later. They were expelled by the Dutch in 1649, and the Dutch were driven off by a Chinese soldier of fortune in 1662.

Macao, the Portuguese commercial base, also became a stepping stone for the second missionary effort of the Roman Catholic Church. In contrast to the Franciscans of the Mongolian era, the highly educated Jesuits who came this time met the Chinese intelligentsia as equals. They were experts in mathematics, astronomy, physics, and geography. One of them, the great Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), was summoned to Peking in 1601 and stayed there until his death. Ricci translated Euclid into Chinese, wrote on contemporary European mathematics, and drew a world map. Among his successors, the versatile German Johann Adam Schall von Bell (1591–1666) composed a treatise on the telescope, was officially appointed to reform the Chinese calendar, and later cast cannons for the Chinese government. Another was the Fleming Ferdinand Verbiest (1623–1688) among whose many achievements was another map of the world and a series of astronomical instruments for the Peking observatory. Furthermore, the Jesuits were not only willing to accept positions in the Chinese bureaucracy and to adjust themselves to the Chinese world view, but also to explain Christianity in Chinese terms. They emphasized the similarities between Christianity and Confucianism, equating the Christian God with the Chinese Heaven, and raising no objection to ancestor worship. This explains why the Jesuits made converts in some circles, but also why they left no lasting mark. Europe, on the other hand, was greatly affected by the activities of the Jesuits in China. Through their writings, Western intellectuals received their first comprehensive knowledge of the country's history and customs.

The last hundred years of the Ming was a period of gradual political decline. In particular the willfulness of the Wan-li Emperor (1573–1620) created an administrative problem. He refused to give a single audience for twenty-five years, and withdrew to those parts of the palace where regular officials had no access. This produced a vacuum which compelled the eunuchs to play a political role. They came to dominate the Inner Court, since only they could see the emperor and act as his real or assumed spokesmen. That it pleased them cannot be doubted. How competent they were is another question. The fact remains that, given a balance of power in favor of the Inner Court, the absence of imperial initiative, and no clear delegation of authority, the eunuchs could not have acted otherwise. The traditional accusation that they were compulsive schemers and usurpers of power misses the point. Tensions increased during the last decades of the dynasty, until all branches of the bureaucracy, and even the Inner Court, were involved in an accelerating struggle between factions. Meanwhile,

other menaces arose from two directions, from the Jurchen without and rebellion within.

The Jurchen had taken possession of Manchuria, and in 1616 proclaimed an imperial dynasty. Open fighting with China began two years later, and increased in violence after 1629. From 1635, the Jurchen called themselves Manchus, a term of unknown origin and meaning, and in 1636 they adopted the name of Ch'ing for their dynasty. In China, two rebel leaders were at this time emerging as major threats to the Ming, of whom Li Tzu-ch'eng was the more competent and dangerous. The government armies, badly led and fighting a war on several fronts, went from defeat to defeat. On April 25, 1644, Li Tzu-ch'eng took Peking, and the last Ming emperor hanged himself on a hill overlooking his palace. The Chinese general Wu San-kuei might have saved him, but he failed to arrive in time, and on May 27 went over to the Manchus with his entire army. These joint forces routed Li Tzu-ch'eng, who, after defiantly having declared himself emperor, evacuated Peking on June 4. He then disappears from history. On June 6, the Manchus entered the city and announced a period of mourning for the last Ming ruler. From October 30, 1644, a Manchu emperor sat on the throne of China.

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29 Early Japan

Proximity to China was the most important outside influence in shaping Japan's civilization, but native conditions produced certain features in its political and social life that were unique. The most striking of these was the tradition of political decentralization. China's great size alone necessitated political complexities that Japan did not need. Moreover, Japan's rainfall is plentiful, and her rivers are short; therefore, what public works were necessary for water conservation and flood control were small in scale and local in range. China's long, dangerous land frontier in inner Asia meant that the most urgent need for political and military control was at precisely the point farthest from the center of the country. Japan, however, after the aborigines had been conquered or absorbed about the ninth century, en-

A.D.	552	Traditional and approximate date for the introduction of Buddhism from Korea
	710	First permanent capital at Nara
	794	Capital at Heian-kyō (Kyoto)
	1185	Minamoto clan victorious in struggle with Taira
	1192	Minamoto Yoritomo receives title of Shogun
	1274, 1281	Abortive attempts by Mongols under Khubilai Khan to invade Japan
	1333	Overthrow of Kamakura shogunate
	1338	Establishment of new shogunate dynasty, the Ashikaga

joyed maritime frontiers that were practically immune from foreign invasion. Military threats to the stability of the central regime remained, but they were internal.

Such basic facts of geography determined the most striking difference between the political needs of China and Japan. Chinese unity depended on a strong, bureaucratic, rationally organized central administration, exerting authority uniformly over its great territory by means of local units that, though powerful, were closely controlled by the central government. Japan could make do with a far looser kind of organization, permitting relatively great independence even in the provinces that were near the capital, and almost total autonomy in frontier areas. This pattern of political organization endured through most of Japanese history. When the nation tried in the seventh and eighth centuries to adopt something closer to the Chinese model, the attempt failed.

A second characteristic of Japan and its people that successfully resisted Chinese inroads until modern times was the tendency for political and military offices to be regarded as inheritable family possessions. The system of civil service examinations and the meritocracy of literati that China developed as a response to her bureaucratic needs was scarcely tried at all. The Japanese, in other words, resisted outside influences when they did not suit national needs. This capacity to resist has been no less characteristic of their civilization than the remarkable willingness to adopt as their own whatever foreign traits seemed desirable to them—first from Korea and China, and more recently from the Western world.

Archaeological evidence indicates a succession of primitive cultures in

the Japanese islands. There was a Paleolithic culture of uncertain age, then two Neolithic cultures lasting from about 8000 B.C. to the early years of the Christian era, then a Bronze Age society that was in contact with the civilization of mainland Asia. Physical similarities between the Japanese people and the races of northeast Asia, together with the probable linguistic kinship between Japanese and Korean, are further evidence of early migrations of continental peoples to the Japanese islands, though it seems likely that the modern Japanese have other racial strains, from Southeast Asia, the islands of the Western Pacific, and from the Caucasoid peoples of northern Siberia.

The earliest Japanese society of which there is historical knowledge existed in the fifth or early sixth century of the Christian era. The characteristic unit of political organization was an extended family of provincial aristocracy known as *uji*, each with a more or less well defined territorial base. One such *uji* (which we know as "imperial") had its base in the province of Yamato, the modern Nara area. This clan had exercised some kind of religious and cultural leadership over the others for some time before there could be said to be much political unity of the Japanese people. A native myth, first written down in the seventh century and no doubt colored in its literary form by Chinese ideas, described the origins of the imperial *uji*. Jimmu, the legendary first "emperor" and ancestor of all later ones, is said to have established a centralized state in 660 B.C. The date was probably a fabrication based on Chinese portent theories, and even the belief in political centralization may have been a rationalization by later Japanese in order to convince themselves that the ancient and "normal" condition of their country was similar to that of big, civilized, bureaucratic China.

The primitive Japanese religion, Shinto, was animistic, seeing godhead in all the forces of nature and society. The "emperor" (how inappropriate are Western and Chinese words to describe early Japanese conditions!) was chief priest. As he was very holy, it was thought that practical affairs were best carried out by subordinates. These were characteristically heads of *uji* attached to the imperial clan and permitted by hereditary right to perform certain functions or to hold certain offices of state.

The introduction of Chinese Buddhism from Korea about the middle of the sixth century has great symbolic significance for Japan. Before that time material progress and the development of national cultural identity had been gradual, aided by stimulation from continental Asia that was no more than intermittent and casual. After that time, both material and nonmaterial change became much more rapid, and took the form of conscious imitation by the Japanese of virtually every aspect of contemporary Chinese civilization. With the Buddhist religion came the associated fine

and useful arts: painting, sculpture, architecture, music, work in bronze and other metals, textile making, and pharmaceutical and medical arts. The classic Chinese language became and remained for several centuries the medium for Japanese written communication in religion, public affairs, and scholarship. Of more lasting importance, the Chinese characters soon came to be adopted—in a complex system mixing ideographic and phonetic elements—for writing the Japanese language.

Chinese social and economic institutions were harder to imitate. Native institutions held out longer against them, and in some instances reemerged after the first intoxication with Chinese culture had receded. Some important Chinese institutions were never successfully copied at all. The elaborate continental systems of military conscription and *corvée* were attempted, but soon abandoned. The Chinese civil service examination system was scarcely attempted. In this crucial instance the native tradition, strongly hereditary and aristocratic, proved too powerful.

Such acculturation in the social and economic spheres, as was more or less successful, operated principally in the direction of the centralization of the state, the strengthening within the central government of the imperial institution, and the development, at Nara (710) and Kyoto (794), of urban centers from which flowed the influence of the new continental culture.

The Nara period (710–794) was the classic age of Chinese civilization in Japan, when at least the upper classes imitated Chinese ways with considerable success. The removal of the capital to Kyoto in 794 by the Emperor Kammu signaled a general reaction against too great a surrender of native ways. In particular there was a reaction against the Buddhist church, which had become so powerful under the patronage of the Nara court that it had at one point threatened to substitute a theocratic government for the native imperial system. Buddhism remained the principal religion of aristocratic Japan, and in the early part of the Heian period (794–1185) took on new significance as a religion of the common people, but it was never again to occupy so high a position in the political life of the country.

Kammu probably had more personal power than any other emperor of Japan. Within a generation after his death the emperor's purely political role in the central government had declined sharply, although his ritual or symbolic role continued. As usual in aristocratic Japan the change took the form of a rise to power of another family claiming hereditary justification for its authority. The Fujiwara clan had a history of long service to the throne. Its remote ancestors had been hereditary functionaries of the Shinto religion, and more recent Fujiwara nobles had helped the imperial line in its contest with the Nara theocracy. In the late ninth and tenth

centuries heads of the clan established a hereditary dictatorship, reducing the emperors to puppets.

As the emperors' strength in the central government waned, so did the central government's control of the provinces. In part this was the result of an old practice of granting immunity from central taxation to the lands of certain ecclesiastical institutions and noble houses. For example, the Fujiwara family derived its political power from an economic base of extensive tax-free lands in the provinces. Such "private" holdings grew by a process similar to the "commendation" of European feudalism: local cultivators gave up their land titles to tax-free neighbors in exchange for protection that the central authority was no longer able to provide.

The fine arts of the Heian period, particularly its literature, immortalize the patricians of the capital city and their haunted concern with earthly evanescence. Another concern with refinement and taste in every aspect of life is equally conspicuous in these works. *The Tale of Genji* (c. 1000), by the court lady Murasaki Shikibu, is the classic masterpiece of Japanese prose and Japan's oldest true novel.

A new military aristocracy arose during the early Heian period to suppress rebellions and to subjugate the aborigines. This class was separate from the civil aristocrats of the capital, though not at first independent of central governmental command. Two such families, the Taira and the Minamoto, contended for power in the twelfth century. After a brief period in which the victorious Taira dominated the central government, the Minamoto made a comeback. Minamoto Yoritomo vanquished the Taira in 1185 and added their vast "private" holdings to those of his own, thus creating an enormous complex of domains outside imperial control. Yoritomo set up headquarters in Kamakura, not far from modern Tokyo. He further strengthened his control over the provinces in 1192 when he obtained from the Emperor the office of Shogun, meaning "general in chief," and implying military command in the name of the central government in areas too distant for its influence to reach.

The government and land systems of the Kamakura period (1185–1333) reached a degree of complexity never attained in Japan before or since. The territory of the country was fragmented into many administrative units, most of them quite tiny. A few of these were still subject to the fiscal powers of the imperial government, but most were private, and especially in the east, subject to the Kamakura shogunate. The shogunate acted as general peacekeeper for the whole country through appointees, known as constables, stationed in all of the provinces. The imperial government continued to exist in Kyoto, and even exerted a measure of legal authority (including the right to legitimize the Kamakura government), but its effectiveness diminished continuously.

The Kamakura shogunate faced its most severe test in 1274 and 1281, when Khubilai Khan's Mongol troops invaded the northern shore of Kyushu. The prowess of arms of the western warriors, and lucky typhoons that destroyed both invading fleets (the *kamikaze* of later legend), preserved Japanese independence. However, the invasion was ultimately destructive to Kamakura power, for the government was forced to permit the local lords of Kyūshū a degree of independence that forecast the end of Kamakura's precarious control over them. When an alliance of provincial forces overthrew the shogunate in 1333, the decentralizing tendencies in Japanese society proved once again stronger than the forces for unity.

Another family of soldiers, the Ashikaga, held the title of shogun from 1338 to 1573. From the start their rule was threatened by dissidence from provincial soldiery, complicated until 1392 by a dynastic schism in the imperial family. Even at their strongest, about the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Ashikaga failed to exercise firm unified control, and after that time the country declined further toward feudal fragmentation and disorder.

The Ashikaga shoguns revived interest in commercial relations with China that had declined since the early part of the Heian period. Simultaneously, Japanese pirates pillaged the mainland coast, establishing a reputation for Japanese ferocity in East Asia, but also, in some instances, building a foundation for more peaceful relations.

This was the age of greatest social disruption in Japanese history, but it was also an age of relatively broad social mobility. Skill at arms, rather than family pedigree, was the best means for a man to win land, wealth, and power. In the process most of the old aristocratic families lost out to new ones. The extreme fragmentation of the individual units of land tenure was somewhat simplified as successful soldiers established rule over relatively large territories. Such local rulers were known as daimyos (feudal lords), their subordinate soldiery as samurai (a word that originally meant "attendant").

Between the late Heian and Ashikaga periods, Buddhism finally became a truly popular religion. Nichiren Buddhism, the only native variety, founded in the thirteenth century, was highly nationalistic and intolerant of other faiths, but the most significant new religious teachings of the middle and late Heian period emphasized the worship of the Bodhisattva Amida. Pessimistic about man's moral capacity to achieve enlightenment by himself, the Amida cult put forth the promise that everyone—including women—would be saved by accepting the grace freely given by Amida.

Also of great significance was the Zen sect, introduced from China about 1200. Zen Buddhists protested against the ritualism and intellectualism of earlier sects, and asserted that a disciplined program of introspection and meditation was the proper path to enlightenment. The great

monasteries of Kyoto played a major role in the economic and cultural life of the Ashikaga period, being centers of private foreign trade and transmitters of a renewed wave of influence from Chinese learning and arts. Zen priests and Zen institutions were instrumental in the development or perfection of monochrome painting, the cult of the tea ceremony, landscape gardening, and even military arts like fencing and judo. A Zen-inspired aesthetic helped shape the classic drama (No). Even the Neo-Confucian philosophy of the Sung, of gigantic import for later Japanese education and thought, was first brought to Japan by teachers of the great Zen monasteries.

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30 India

A striking passage in the Vishnu Purana, a Hindu religious text of the seventh or eighth century, mocks the endless succession of kings of India who had boasted, "This earth is mine, it is my son's, it belongs to my dynasty," not knowing that "they themselves are but foam upon the wave." That this statement reflects historical experience as well as the conventional hyperbole of religious pessimism is suggested by the historical records of India for the centuries between the breakdown of the Gupta empire in the sixth century and the establishment of the hegemony of the Turks in the twelfth century. While some dynasties lasted as identifiable ruling families for centuries, virtually nothing is known of the personalities or the achievements of most of the hundreds of rulers whose names are preserved in archaeological and numismatic evidence. Nor is there evidence of any great movements that altered the social structure, or of events whose influence was felt throughout society during this period. Here, perhaps, is an essential point of contrast between the Western, or European, historical experience and that of India: at no time does Indian history have

A.D	500	Pandya's ruling at Madurai
	c. 540	End of Gupta dynasty
	c. 540	Rise of Chalukyas at Vatapi
	c. 606–646	Harsha of Kanauj
	700–800	Spread of Buddhism to Nepal and Tibet
	711	Arab invasion of Sind
	c. 750	Rise of imperial Pratiharas; rise of Rashtrakutas
	760	Palas in Bengal
	c. 846	Rise of Cholas and defeat of Pallavis
	c. 970	Reemergence of Chalukyan power and defeat of Rashtrakutas
	1001	Beginning of raids by Turks under Mahmud of Ghazni
	1024	Destruction of Somnath by Mahmud
	1175	First Indian expedition by Muhammad Ghuri
	1192	Defeat at Tarain of Prithvi Raja by the Turks
	1206–1290	Slave Dynasty (beginning of Delhi Sultanate)
	1290–1320	Khalji Sultans
	1320–1413	Tughluq Sultans
	1336	Founding of Vijayanagar
	1347	Founding of Bahmani Sultanate
	1398	Invasion of Timur
	1414–1451	Sayyid Sultans
	1451–1526	Lodi Sultans
	1498	Arrival of Vasco da Gama

real analogues to monumental events like the invention of printing or the steam engine, the Reformation or the Enlightenment.

The history of India in the period after 600, therefore, depends less on events and movements than on the defining characteristics of politics and society. One of these was the essentially unstable multistate system that was the normal political arrangement everywhere on the subcontinent. According to Hsuan Tsang, the Chinese Buddhist pilgrim who visited India in the middle of the seventh century, India was divided into seventy kingdoms. The figure may not be accurate, but it indicates the nature of political life, the existence of numerous small states. This political situation is often spoken of as fragmentation or disunity, as if in contrast to a more normal state of political unity, but in fact, control of large areas of the subcontinent by a single ruler was always exceptional. The numerous small kingdoms constituted a web of conflicting sovereignties, each of which regarded conquest as the means of legitimizing claims to kingship. Such conquest did not involve outright destruction of other rulers, but only the acknowledgment of defeat by the payment of tribute. When the opportunity came, the tribute would cease to be paid, and the defeated ruler would resume his independence.

War was the business of kings, and this meant that frontiers were never precisely defined or acknowledged by other rulers. Within his own territories, control by the ruler did not penetrate very deeply into the fabric of social life; aside from making war, the principal function of the royal government was to collect taxes. Indian political thinkers continued to insist that the king's right to tax was balanced by his duty to protect the people: "He who receives taxes and still fails to slay thieves incurs a double blame, namely in this world the dissatisfaction of his subjects and in the next the loss of heaven."

Other defining characteristics of the period relate to its social and cultural institutions. Religious beliefs and practices, while still based on the ancient Vedic scripture and cultus, expressed themselves through the two great sectarian divisions of Hinduism, Vaishnavism, the worship of Vishnu, and Shaivism, the worship of Shiva. Almost all the complexities of Indian religious experience, metaphysical speculation, mythology, and cultic practices were subsumed in these fluid but enduring syntheses of Hindu devotion. A corollary was the erosion of the two great heterodoxies, Buddhism and Jainism. Closely linked with these changes in the religious structure was a tendency for what may be termed "Sanskrit culture" to become the common property of the dominant religious and intellectual groups everywhere in India. But, at the same time, the speech of the ordinary people was diverging more and more from that of the Sanskrit of the intellectual classes.

A fourth general characteristic of the period is the social organization commonly, but not very accurately, known as the caste system. No single unified system existed then or later, but, allowing for regional variations, it is possible to make generalizations that are valid for social organization in all parts of India. Caste groups in some form were everywhere and at all levels of culture accepted as the normal pattern of society. That this implied no unusual degree of fragmentation either in theory or in practice is evidenced by its acceptance in both the sacred and secular literature of the period as the normative pattern for a just and orderly society.

The overarching feature of the system was the ascription of social status on the basis of ritual purity. No agreed hierarchial ranking existed for all groups, even within a small region, with one vital exception. Brahmins everywhere claimed, and were recognized as possessing, a degree of ritual purity that elevated them above all other castes. This higher status was defined only in terms of the ritual practices of Hinduism, and implied no superiority in either economic or political position. In practice, however, most positions of trust and responsibility in the various kingdoms were filled by Brahmins. The religious literature of the period completes the tendency, observable from early times, of exalting Brahmanic claims and emphasizing the degradation of the most ritually impure. For the first time a few texts declare that some groups are so ritually defiling that even the sight of them is polluting.

Remarkably little is known of the economy that supported these political and cultural institutions, but during this period there seem to have been no innovations either in agricultural technique or in items of production. The most impressive feature of the economy was its ability to meet the demands for revenue imposed by the various rulers and to adjust to the vagaries of the monsoon climate while maintaining a very large population over a long period of time. This does not mean, as has been sometimes suggested, that India in the seventh and eighth centuries enjoyed a high standard of living; as the modern world knows, large populations may be an index of poverty. It does suggest, however, that optimum use was being made of resources within the limits of technical achievements, and that these were well adjusted to the political and social systems.

According to the best estimates, the population of India from the first century of the Christian era until the nineteenth century was about 100 million. This population was overwhelmingly agrarian, although there were many cities of great antiquity and fame. Most of these, such as Benares, Ujjain, and Kanchipuram, were centers of religious pilgrimages. Other cities grew up around great forts, such as Ajmer in the north and Devagiri in the south, or around a ruler's court. Such cities naturally attracted trade and commerce. Some industries, largely textile production and metal

handicrafts, were also located in the cities, but village craftsmen must always have been more numerous and more important for the economy. The staple crops were wheat, rice, and in the less-fertile areas varieties of millets. Cotton textiles and spices remained, as they had been for centuries, the main items in India's export trade. Horses from Western and Central Asia were perhaps the most sought-after import. Much of the sea trade between India and other countries had passed into the hands of Arabs, although in earlier centuries Indians themselves had traveled widely throughout the eastern seas.

It is against the background of this mature civilization, with its well-developed mechanisms of social control, that the seeming political fragmentation of the Indian subcontinent must be seen. The outlines of the political history of the period are confusing because dynasties, not geographic regions, are the focus of attention. Boundaries were seldom permanent even for a generation. Furthermore, a small tributary state might rise to prominence in one area, fade into insignificance, and then in a few generations emerge again as a considerable power. Given these complexities, all that can be done is to identify the centers of political power in the main geographic regions and, when relevant, to note their cultural roles.

In south India, two important dynasties emerged at the end of the sixth century, the Pandyas and the Pallavas. The Pandyas, with their capital at Madurai, and the Pallavas, whose capital was Kanchipuram, controlled between them the rich coastal areas south of Madras. Both dynasties retained importance until the beginning of the tenth century. The Cheras ruled the adjoining lands along the western coast in what is now Kerala, but their history is very obscure, although their ports were centers for trade with both Western Asia, Southeast Asia, and China. Evidence of another kind of link with the world beyond is found in the career of Shankaracharya (c. 788–820), the most influential of Hindu theologians, who was a native of Kerala. The centers of study and worship that he, or at least his immediate disciples, established at Badrinath in the Himalayas, Puri in Orissa, and Dwarka in Gujarat indicate both communications between distant places and the pervasiveness of Hindu doctrine.

In the Pandya and Pallava kingdoms religious and cultural changes of great importance were taking place. Buddhism and Jainism had both been strong, but in the seventh century they were weakened by a great resurgence of devotional Hinduism, and within two centuries they had virtually disappeared. The devotional, or *bhakti*, cults were divided into two main groups, centered on either Shiva or Vishnu, but both shared an intense and passionate emotionalism. Little is known of the historical

origins of bhakti. It probably represents a fusion of Dravidian elements with the Vedic, or Aryan, religion that had penetrated the south centuries before. Both the Shaivite and Vaishnavite cults produced a vast devotional literature in Tamil that colored the lives of the people and gave the area an identity and self-awareness that it has never lost. The Hindu resurgence found architectural expression at Mamallapuram and Kanchipuram in rock carvings and temples that are among the glories of Indian art.

The successors to the Pallavas and the Pandyas were the Cholas of Tanjore (c. 846–1279), among the best known of Indian dynasties. Under Rajaraja (985–1012) and Rajendra I (1012–1044), Chola armies raided the north as far as the delta of the Ganges, naval expeditions were sent against the kingdom of Srivijaya in Sumatra, and Ceylon was conquered. This successful expansion was matched by brilliant cultural achievements. Numerous temples were built throughout the Chola dominions, the largest and most splendid being erected about A.D. 1000 at Tanjore, the capital. Tamil religious literature continued to flourish, and in the twelfth century Kampan, one of the greatest of Tamil poets, wrote a version of the Sanskrit epic, the *Ramayana*. The Cholas when north India passed under Muslim rule in the thirteenth century also patronized Sanskrit learning; it was to a very considerable extent in southern temples and monasteries that Sanskrit culture was preserved.

The history of the Deccan Plateau (roughly the area above the southern coastal littoral and south of the Narmada River) is distinct from that of the southern dynasties, although inextricably linked through cultural and political contacts. The Chalukya dynasty, with its capital at Badami, controlled this region from the sixth century to the middle of the eighth. Geography led the Chalukyas into frequent wars with rulers of both south and north India, but their overthrow came in about 752 from one of their own tributary states, the Rashtrakutas. By the end of the century the Rashtrakutas were masters of all of the Deccan, and had begun to expand toward the north. Under Govinda III (793–814) their power extended from the Gangetic plain to Cape Comorin, although control over this vast area was never very firm. The Rashtrakutas were great builders, their most memorable achievement being the great temple of Ellora, carved from solid rock. They were also patrons of literature, in both Sanskrit and Kannada, the language of the area where their political power was based.

The Rashtrakutas were replaced as the dominant political power in the Deccan at the end of the tenth century by a tributary chieftain who claimed descent from the Chalukya kings. This new Chalukya confronted the Cholas in a long series of wars throughout the next two centuries. The dynasty was less involved in the political life of the north than were its predecessors, thus sharpening the division between north and south. It is of

great political and cultural significance that after the Rashtrakuta expansion no power based in the south exercised political control in the north until the eighteenth century.

There were no dynasties in north India in the seventh and eighth centuries of the importance of those in the south. Following the breakdown of the Gupta empire, in the sixth century the invading Huns established short-lived kingdoms under Toramana and Mihirkula. It is probably the reign of these kings that the *Puranas* and other Hindu texts describe with horror as the time when "kings of churlish spirit, violent temper, and ever addicted to falsehood" inflicted "death on women, children, and cows," and seized the property of their subjects. Early in the seventh century, Harsha (c. 606–646), the ruler of a principality north of Delhi, created an empire that included much of the Gangetic plain up to Bengal. Harsha is better known than any other king of ancient India with the exception of Asoka, but his fame is somewhat accidental, since his court chronicler, Bana, was a writer of genius and the Chinese pilgrim Hsuan Tsang left a memorable record of a visit to Harsha's court at Kanauj. His empire of loosely controlled tributary states did not survive his death.

Toward the end of the eighth century two new dynasties, the Palas of Bengal and the Pratiharas of Rajasthan, began a struggle for the control of north India. Possession of Kanauj, the old capital of Harsha, was the symbol of hegemony. The Palas were originally based in eastern Bengal, but they had added most of Bengal and Bihar to their kingdom. Under Dharmapala (c. 770–810), they advanced far into the Punjab, bringing Kanauj and many of the smaller states of western India under their suzerainty. They were patrons of Buddhism, and their gifts to the great monastic center of learning at Nalanda as well as to temples throughout their dominions kept the old religion alive at a time when it was disappearing elsewhere in India. Tantric Buddhism, with its emphasis on magic rituals and the worship of deities, had become dominant in Bengal, and this form of Buddhism passed during the Pala period to Tibet. Contacts were also made by the Palas with the Sailendras, the Buddhist rulers of Sumatra and Java.

Pala influence in north India was challenged and finally overcome by the Pratiharas, a dynasty which had its origins in Rajasthan, and which had conquered most of central India. By 835 it was in control of Kanauj and the Gangetic plain. For the rest of the century the Pratiharas were the greatest power in north India. Their administrative system followed the familiar Indian pattern: central territories ruled directly by the king, outlying areas in the hands of tributary chieftains. The ruins of numerous temples show the Pratiharas to have been great builders who carried on the styles and techniques pioneered during the Gupta period. Shiva was the

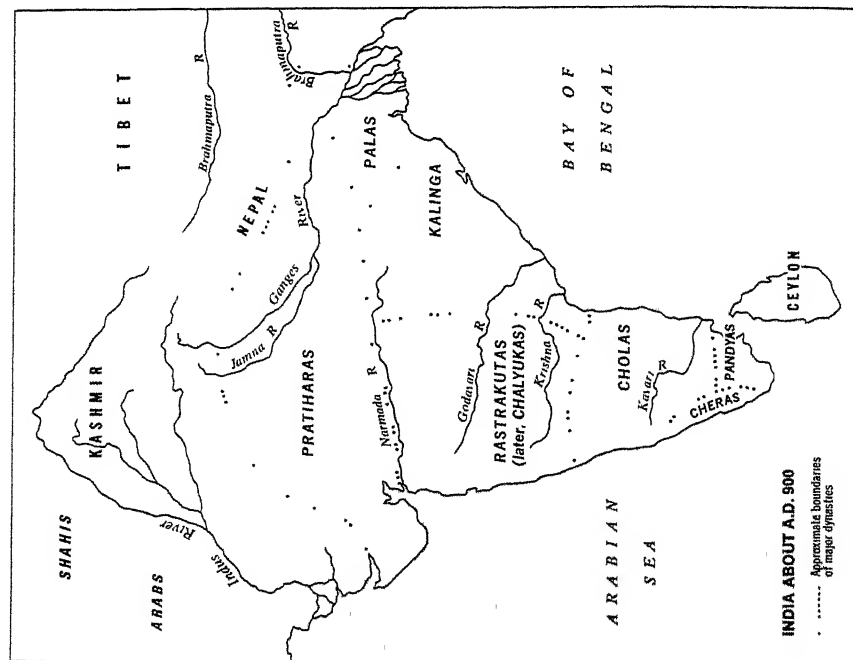
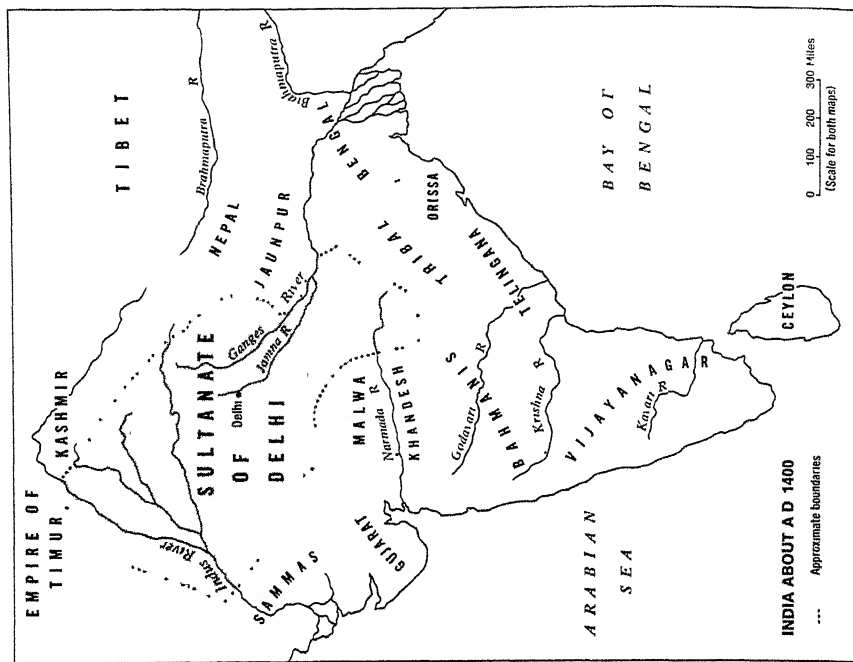
most popular deity, but temples were also erected to Vishnu, and the Jains were also patronized by the rulers.

The Pratihara power weakened early in the tenth century, although the dynasty ruled at Kanauj until 1019. Continual wars with the Palas on their eastern frontiers and with the Rashtrakutas from the south were probably important in this decline, but, as with other Indian empires, the existence of strong tributary states within the administrative structure made the failure of central control inevitable. Political power throughout north India passed to local chieftains, most of whom belonged to what had become known as Rajput clans. For the next two centuries the political history of the north is complicated by the rivalries and struggles of the principal clans. The origin of these clans can probably be traced to the Huns and other invaders who had established their power in Rajasthan in the sixth and seventh centuries.

The political system of the Rajputs has often been described as a kind of feudalism, but the term is misleading. The central feature of Rajput polity was not a contractual relationship between lord and vassal but blood relationships within a clan. The clan leader made grants of lands and in return was assisted in war by the levies of the grantees, but both in fact and in theory such service was considered a duty owed to the clan as a whole, not just to a political leader.

Almost all of the Rajput courts were centers of Sanskrit learning, with the rulers patronizing dramatists, poets, and theologians. Much of the literature produced during this period was mannered and artificial, but an interesting exception was the bardic chronicles which glorified the deeds of royal patrons. These chronicles emphasized a chivalric code that saw death in battle as the natural end of the hero, with acts of individual heroism being exalted without reference to their effects. Temple architecture, too, displayed artistic creativity. At Khajuraho in central India the Chandella kings built a great temple complex that is unique in India both for the placing of numerous structures in a unified pattern and for the sculptured representation of erotic pleasures. Another great temple complex was begun at Bhuvaneshwar in Orissa about the same time. Both of these probably reflect the strong contemporary influence of Tantric cults of Shaivism. The wealth of the Jains, largely derived from trade, is shown by the splendor of the temples they erected on Mount Abu in southern Rajasthan.

Rajput hegemony in north India came to an end when Prithvi Raja, the Chauhan ruler who had established his power in the region around Delhi, was defeated in 1192 while leading an alliance of Rajput kings against an invading army under the Turkish ruler Muhammad Ghuri. The Rajput clans did not by any means disappear as territorial powers. Some of them fought the invaders throughout the following centuries of Muslim rule. But



they never recovered their hold on Delhi and the Gangetic heartland. For the next five centuries the focus of political history shifted from them and their Hindu predecessors to the Turks from Central Asia and the other Muslim peoples who gained control of India. It should be kept in mind, however, that Hindu civilization remained dominant in most areas of India and that even at the height of Muslim power probably no more than a fifth of the population embraced Islam.

Although in the end it was Central Asian Muslims who conquered India, the first push of Islamic power came from the Middle East. In 711 an Arab expedition invaded Sind, in the lower Indus Valley, and conquered all the territory up to Multan. This region fell under the control of the Caliphate of Baghdad until the middle of the ninth century, and then under two independent Muslim rulers. Meanwhile, the marchlands of India, Baluchistan, Seistan, and much of what is now Afghanistan, traditionally under Indian cultural influence, had passed into the hands of Islamic peoples. This Islamicization of the borderlands was of great consequence, for it provided bases through the centuries for attacks on India.

The great advance into the vital heartlands of India came at the beginning of the tenth century from the Kingdom of Ghazni, a state that had been established in Afghanistan by Turkish commanders of the decaying Samanid dynasty of Persia. Mahmud of Ghazni (998-1030) made numerous raids into India, and while his primary aim was to collect treasure and slaves for his vast empire in Persia and Central Asia, the raids had permanent effects. They destroyed the already weakened Pratiharas, and added considerable Indian territory to the Ghaznavid empire. All of Sind acknowledged his authority, and the land of the Shahis, the Hindu dynasty that had long controlled the district west of the Indus, was also incorporated into the empire along with other territory east of the Indus. Lahore became the capital of the Ghaznavids' Indian province.

Further Muslim expansion came at the end of the twelfth century under Muhammad Ghuri, the leader of the new Turkish dynasty that had established itself at Ghur, north of Kabul. The Ghuris moved against India, partly like their Ghaznavid predecessors, in search of plunder, but also with the intention of establishing themselves as a territorial power. They defeated the Muslim rulers of Sind and Lahore in 1186, and then moved against the Rajput kingdoms. Prithvi Raja, the ruler of Delhi, heading an alliance of Rajput kings, was defeated at the great battle of Tarain, north of Delhi, in 1192. The Ghurids pushed on eastward. By 1201 they had reached Bengal and sacked the capital of the ruler.

It is important not to overstress either the speed or the completeness of the Turkish victory. Muslim powers had been on the borders of India since the eighth century; Turkish raids had begun two centuries before the Battle

of Tarain and another 130 years would pass before the Muslim armies penetrated to the extreme south. Nevertheless, the power of the Rajputs was broken at Tarain. The Turkish victory has often been explained as proof of their devotion to a common fanatical creed and the equality of all their soldiers in contrast with the divisiveness of the caste system and the lack of social concern engendered by the Hindu religion. Actually, the courage of the Hindu armies impressed even their adversaries, thousands died bravely on the field of battle. Nor were the armies of the Ghurids any more homogeneous than those of the Indians: many of the soldiers were undoubtedly Indian slaves or conscripts. The Turks' chief advantages were in military organization, tactics, and equipment. They depended essentially on horsemen armed with light bows, a force far swifter and more mobile than the cumbersome Indian armies, with their elephants and vast numbers of infantrymen.

After the death of Muhammad Ghuri in 1206, India ceased to be part of the Ghurid empire. During the thirteenth century the Delhi Sultans added little new territory to the original conquest of the Ghurids. However, under Balban (1266–1287) authority was centralized and the power of local chieftains broken, since the Turkish view of the functions of state inherited from the Persians was far different from the Indian. This move toward centralization remained characteristic of Muslim polity in India, even though it was seldom fully realized in practice. Another feature of the political system established in this period was the tacit realization that the Hindus could not be forced to accept the religion of Islam, and that to govern the country compromises would have to be made. This meant recognizing the Hindus as *dhimmi*s, a status originally intended for Christians and Jews, but not for idolators. There were certainly many instances of religious persecution, including the destruction of Hindu temples, and sometimes (during wars) forced conversions, but in general expediency required limited toleration. There was little change in either the methods or the personnel of local government, so that Hindus remained in charge of revenue collection. Many Hindu chieftains maintained their status in their old territories by agreeing to pay tribute to the new government.

The Islamic overlords of India never solved the problem of arranging for an orderly succession; the death of a ruler always signaled a factional struggle. The victors after the death of Balban were the Khalji family. Under Ala-ud-din (1296–1316), the most energetic member of the new dynasty, the Delhi Sultanate expanded greatly. After taking the great Rajput strongholds at Chitor and Ranthambor in Rajasthan, Ala-ud-din's armies moved south. By this time the empires of the Cholas and the Chalukyas had given way to four main successor states: the Yadavas at Devagiri, the Kakatiyas at Warangal, the Hoysalas at Dorasumtura, and a

revived branch of the ancient Pandya family at Madurai. All of these kingdoms were invaded, their capitals plundered, and the rulers forced to acknowledge suzerainty.

After Ala-ud-din's death a new dynasty, the Tughluqs, seized power in Delhi, and under Muhammad Tughluq (1325–1351), the Sultanate reached its greatest territorial extent. The southern kingdoms, whose allegiance to the Sultanate after Ala-ud-din's initial victories had been minimal, were once more subjugated. With all India except Kashmir, Orissa, and remote areas in Rajasthan within the Sultanate, no ruler since Asoka had included so much of India within his empire. At the same time that he was building up this vast empire, Muhammad Tughluq endeavored to exercise close control over the economy, fixing prices, replacing gold and silver money with copper and brass tokens, and regulating exports and imports. However, he lacked the administrative machinery to enforce such sweeping reforms, and his great empire began to dissolve. By the time of his death in 1351, most of the territory seized during the previous fifty years had been lost. The invasion of north India by Timur, who sacked Delhi in 1398, speeded the decline. None of the Muslim rulers of Delhi could reverse the process of decay until the establishment of the Mughal power in the sixteenth century.

The realignment of political power that began in the middle of the fourteenth century demonstrated many of the features characteristic of the breakup of previous Indian empires: the emergence of nuclear geographic regions as political units; the reassertion of independence by old dynasties and lineages that had paid tribute to the central power; the tendency of provincial governors and military commanders to seize power in areas under their control. While political unification provides the focus for Indian history, the movement toward regionalism was no less creative and dynamic. Neither in a cultural nor in a political sense was this movement anarchic or even particularly confused; many of the great achievements of both Hindu and Muslim civilization are associated with the regional kingdoms. Nor is there any reason to suppose that the lives of the people were any harder under the regional kingdoms than under the great empires. The collection of the land revenue, the major function of Indian governments, went on in more or less the same way under large or small political units.

Of the Muslim kingdoms that emerged in the fourteenth century, the Bahmani Sultanate was the most important. Its capital was first at Gulbarga and then at Bidar. Originating in a revolt by the military commanders of the Sultanate's southern possession, it controlled all of the Deccan Plateau north of the Krishna River for 150 years beginning in 1345. Then it, too, fell apart. Provincial governors established their independence and set up five Sultanates: Berar (1490–1568), Ahmadnagar

(1490–1633), Bidar (1487–1609), Bijapur (1490–1686) and Golkunda (1512–1687).

Bengal became an independent Muslim kingdom in 1338, and following Timur's invasion at the end of the century, Muslim succession states were formed in the territories more directly under Delhi's control—Malwa, Gujerat, and Khandesh. In all these states, the majority of the population was Hindu, but the courts were centers of Islamic learning and culture.

Hindu power revived in two important areas, Rajasthan and south India beyond the Krishna River. A number of Rajput clans had fled before the invading armies of the Sultanate and taken refuge in the deserts and hills, and with the decay of the power of Delhi two principalities, Mewar and Marwar (modern Udaipur and Jodhpur), gained control of much of Rajasthan.

In south India, a powerful Hindu kingdom that took its name from its capital, Vijayanagar, city of victory, was founded about 1336 by the descendants of the Yadava dynasty, deposed by the Sultans. Even more than the Sultanate of Delhi, Vijayanagar appears to have been a military state. A Portuguese traveler in the early years of the sixteenth century estimated that it regularly maintained a million men under arms, although, given the resources of the area, this must be an exaggeration. In any case, Vijayanagar was frequently at war especially against the Sultanates to the north, and the use of cannon as well as cavalry indicates that the rulers had adopted the new techniques introduced by the Muslims.

Reflections of the power and wealth of the kings of Vijayanagar can still be seen throughout south India, for many of the great gateways and pillared halls on the temples were built by them. The capital itself was thought by contemporary European travelers to be larger than Rome, and the great waterworks, the splendor of the temples, and the elaborate ritual of the court impressed every visitor.

Vijayanagar flourished for more than 200 years, but in the middle of the sixteenth century it was undermined by the growing independence of its tributary chieftains and by pressures from the Sultanates to the north. In 1564 the Sultanates formed an alliance that defeated the Vijayanagar army and destroyed the great capital city. Although the dynasty maintained itself in an attenuated form, it never recovered its power. Some of the empire fell to the Sultans, but most of it was divided up among their former chieftains at Madurai, Tanjore, and Ginji. But again, these small kingdoms continued the religious and cultural traditions of Hindu civilization.

Nor did the decay of the central authority of the Sultanate cause much diminution of Islamic influence in India. Despite its loss of power, Delhi remained a center of Islamic culture and influence to which scholars, artists, and theologians came in great numbers. All of the independent

Muslim kingdoms that arose in the fourteenth century, especially the great Bahmani Sultanate, duplicated the role of Delhi as patrons of Islamic culture. In India as elsewhere Muslim rulers were great builders of cities, forts, mosques, and tombs, and such activity continued throughout the Sultanate period. The Turks had been deeply influenced by Persian culture before they entered India, and Persian literature and art set the standards of taste and provided models for the Indian writers and artists that the rulers and nobility patronized.

The permanent existence of a large Muslim minority was undoubtedly the most significant result of the Islamic invasion. Political control by the Turkish intruders would pass, as had the rule of other foreigners, but for the first time an invader had come with cultural and religious institutions of a kind that resisted assimilation to the Indian cultural patterns. But just as the Muslims were not absorbed into Hinduism, neither was India overwhelmed by the culture of Islam as was the case with many of the civilizations conquered by the Muslims. What was visible in India in 1500, after three centuries of Muslim political presence, is still visible: two cultures and two religions living within the confines of their institutional forms. There were, of course, areas of contact and mutual assimilation. Many low-caste Hindus became Muslims, but they took with them styles of life—as, for example, marriage customs—that were not substantially modified by the change of religion. The Hindu upper classes who were employed in the Muslim courts and armies learned Persian and adopted Persian manners and dress. But at the profoundest level of theological and philosophical thought there are no signs that either civilization deeply affected the other. It is significant that the followers of poet-saints like Kabir (d. 1518) and Nanak (c. 1469–1538), who show influences from both Hinduism and Islam, either founded a new community, as with Nanak and the Sikhs, or a new sect within Hinduism that appealed mainly to the lower castes, as with Kabir.

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31 Southeast Asia

About two and a half thousand years ago the ancestors of the peoples who today occupy Southeast Asia began leaving their homelands in China and Tibet, driven by motives that are lost to history. Traveling south, down fertile valleys and across rich alluvial plains toward the sea, their migrations continued for many centuries. Although they had to push aside or absorb the small groups of aborigines they found in their way, for the most part the passage was peaceful. Some settled in mainland Southeast Asia, becoming the Chams and Khmers of Vietnam and Cambodia, the Pyus and Mons of Burma and western Thailand, and the Malays of the Peninsula. Others took to the sea and, spreading through the Indonesian archipelago, became the ancestors of interior peoples like the Bataks of Sumatra and the Dyaks of Borneo, and also of the coastal and riverine groups of the islands, who are known collectively as Malayo-Indonesians. The most venturesome of all sailed their frail outrigger canoes to distant Polynesia and Oceania, but New Guinea marked the limit of their expansion southward.

In prehistoric times the peoples of Southeast Asia developed a distinctive and complex agricultural civilization. Their main cereal crop, then as now, was rice. In growing it they employed both the *ladang* or dry cultivation method and the *sawah* or permanent irrigation system, bringing the latter to near perfection, especially in Java. They were among the first men to domesticate tubers and legumes, and some of their crops, notably the yam, they exported to the rest of the world. Their work animals were the ox and the water buffalo. They worshiped their ancestors and spirits which they believed to be immanent in fields and streams. Their descent and inheritance systems were matrilineal. Over the centuries they devised a corpus of social custom and tradition (*adat* in Malaysia and Indonesia) which survives still and, functionally, is the equivalent of Western common law.

Culturally the strongest external influence on early Southeast Asia was exercised by India. Hinduism and Buddhism spread widely in the area, bringing with them the art of writing, along with new deities, epics, and mythologies. From India came the idea of a despotic God-King who must be supported by his subjects as their necessary link with the supernatural forces that control the world. Brahman priests were employed by ambitious Southeast Asian rulers hoping to expand their dominions and, through consecration as divine kings, to legitimize their conquests. Imported Indian

- A.D. c 657-681 Reign of Jayavarman I (Khmer)
 671 Visit to Srivijaya of the pilgrim I-tsing
 732 Accession of Sanjaya (Java)
 929 Accession of Sindok (Java)
 1002-1050 Reign of Suryavarman I (Khmer)
 1044 Founding of Empire of Pagan (Burma)
 c. 1222 Founding of Singosari (Java)
 1268 Accession of Kertanagara (Java)
 1287 Mongol conquest of Pagan (Burma)
 1292 Visit of Marco Polo to Perlak (Sumatra)
 1293 Mongol invasion of Java; founding of Empire of Majapahit
 1330-1364 Rule of Gaja Mada, *mapatih* of Majapahit
 1350 Founding of T'ai kingdom of Ayut'ia (Siam)
 c. 1402 Founding of Malacca
 1431 Fall of Angkor (Khmer)
 1448-1488 Reign of Tralok (Siam)
 1450 Promulgation of the "Palace Law" of Siam
 1511 Portuguese conquest of Malacca
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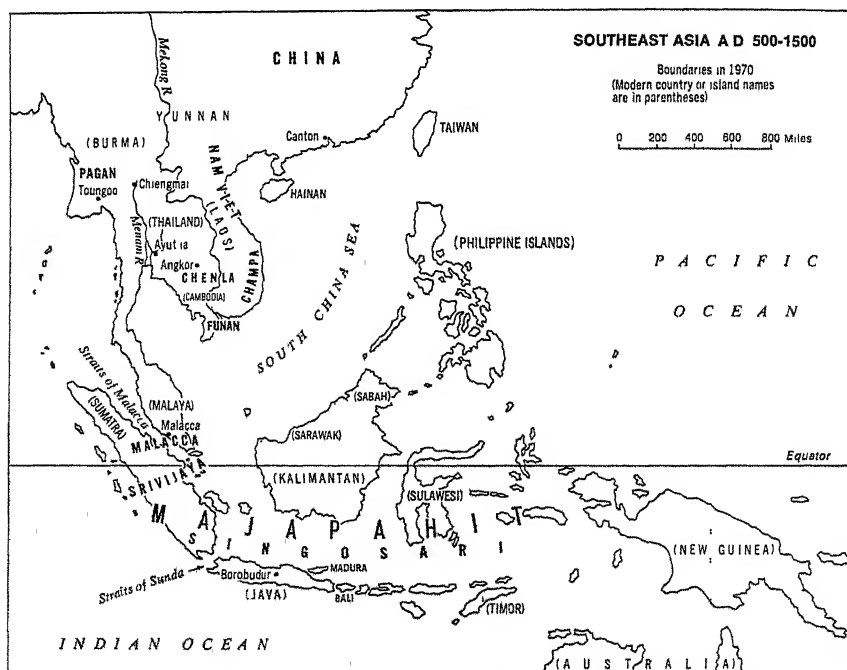
ideas on ritual, ceremony, and court procedure and, especially, on what a king was entitled to demand from his subjects had a powerful impact on state formation throughout Southeast Asia.

The earliest state of which clear evidence survives was Funan, founded in the Mekong Delta not later than the first century A.D. by Kaundinya, the "King of the Mountain." Funan was a maritime state, and maintained commercial relations with India, Persia, and China. Its greatest king was Jayavarman (d 514), who lived in a palace with a tiered roof, rode on an elephant, and governed walled cities whose inhabitants prized gold, silver, pearls, and engraved ornaments, and who delighted in cockfighting and pigfighting. Funan survived until the seventh century, when it was subjugated by one of its own feudatories, the state of Chenla.

North of Funan and Chenla lay the kingdom of Nam-Viet, which ruled the lands now known as Tongking and Annam in northern and central Vietnam. Nam-Viet had been under Chinese domination since its annexation by the Han emperor Wu Ti in the first century B.C. It remained part of China for the next thousand years, regaining its independence only

with the fall of the T'ang dynasty in the tenth century. A millennium of Chinese rule left a strong imprint. Both Tongking and Annam and the subsequent Annamite empire which ruled both regions followed the Confucian political ethic, at least in theory, and government was administered through a scholar-official mandarin. But, despite heavy attacks by the Mongols in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the Annamites succeeded in avoiding full assimilation, and were able to keep their own language and customs. By the end of the fifteenth century they had absorbed the kingdom of Champa which lay on their southern border.

West of Annam and Champa arose in the ninth century the Khmer empire of Cambodia. It was the Khmers who elevated the principle of the *deva-raja*, or God-King, to the highest peak it attained in Southeast Asia. During the reign of Suryavarman II (1113–c.1150) the building of the mighty temple complex of Angkor Wat began. The main sanctuary at Angkor Wat is 130 feet high, and stands on a stone-encased platform which is itself 40 feet high and 750 feet square. Nearby a later ruler constructed Angkor Thom, whose central feature, the Bayon, is a massive pyramidal temple surmounted by a golden tower resting on four gigantic carved heads. Artistically, the temples of Angkor were a supreme achievement, but build-



ing them placed a heavy economic strain on the Khmer empire. An army of craftsmen worked for many decades to erect and decorate the temples, hundreds of priests, dancers, musicians, and officials served in them, and the labor of tens of thousands of villages was needed to pay for their upkeep. At the height of the empire's prosperity 12.5 million acres of rice fields lay under permanent cultivation, watered by a network of canals and reservoirs stretching for hundreds of miles. In the end the Khmers rebelled against their God-Kings. They turned to the type of Buddhism preached by missionaries of the Mahavihara sect, who preferred poverty and austerity to ornate temples and ceremonies. By the early fifteenth century Angkor had been abandoned. The Cambodian kingdom survived, though much reduced in size and power and under constant threat from its neighbor to the west, the T'ai state of Ayut'ia.

The T'ai, or Shan, peoples originated in Yunnan. During the eighth century they had formed a kingdom there, Nan-chao, which acted as a buffer between Tibet and China. The Chinese emperors wished to swallow up Yunnan, and the T'ais fought a losing battle for their independence, eventually the Nan-chao kingdom was obliterated by the Mongols in the thirteenth century. For many hundreds of years before this, however, the T'ais had been filtering down into the Southeast Asian peninsula. They occupied the middle and lower Menam basin, and the T'ai state from which modern Siam, or Thailand, is descended was founded at Ayut'ia in 1350.

From Ayut'ia the T'ais expanded their rule over much of the Malay Peninsula and into lower Burma. They defeated Cambodia in a long series of wars, and held in check the strong Chiangmai kingdom of Laos. As they carved out living space for themselves, they developed an administrative system that was unique in Southeast Asia. Elsewhere the struggles of one kingdom or dynasty against another were of small concern to the ordinary man unless he happened to get in the way of the fighting or was plagued by especially heavy taxation. The mass of Southeast Asians lived in self-sufficient villages, cut off as effectively from their political superiors as from the outside world. In the T'ai state, by contrast, a centralized bureaucracy and a codified system of law, both inaugurated by King Trailok (1448-1488), welded together rulers and ruled in a hierarchical social structure in which each man understood his own duties and privileges. The government was divided into civil and military branches and run on departmental lines by ministers with clearly defined roles. By the standards of the time and place, the T'ai state was efficiently organized.

To the west of the land of the T'ais lay Burma. Here by the eleventh century the dominant political power was the empire of Pagan, established at the expense of the indigenous Mons by an immigrant people from inner

Asia known to history as the Burmans. When Mongol invaders destroyed Pagan at the end of the thirteenth century, a long period of near-anarchy set in. On the one hand the hostility of the tribesmen of the Shan hills to the north prevented the Mongols from profiting by their conquest; on the other these same tribesmen proved unable to create a state of their own stable enough to replace Pagan. It was not until the sixteenth century, with the rise of the dynasty of Toungoo under King Tabinshwehti (1531–1550) that modern Burma began to emerge.

In mainland Southeast Asia the major states were land powers. Essentially, their economic strength derived less from trade than from their own agricultural productivity supplemented by the profits of a certain amount of interregional exchange. But in the Indonesian archipelago the reverse was true: the key to political dominance lay in sea power, in the ability to make sudden raids on the ports and coastlines of one's rivals, and in the possession of sufficient naval strength to dictate one's own conditions of trade. Not only the seaborne commerce of the archipelago was at stake. Vessels plying between the Middle East, India, and China had to sail past Indonesia's front door. They could pass either through the Straits of Malacca between the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra or through the Straits of Sunda between Sumatra and Java; these were the only practicable seaways connecting western and eastern Asia. A power strong enough to control both straits, therefore, could place a stranglehold on what, as early as the fifteenth century, was one of the most important maritime trade routes in the world.

The state that profited from this situation was the empire of Srivijaya, which had its capital at Palembang on the southeast coast of Sumatra. From the seventh to the tenth centuries the rulers of Srivijaya, the unchallenged overlords of the straits of both Sunda and Malacca, intercepted and taxed long-distance commerce in these waters. In addition to ruling most of Sumatra, Srivijaya exercised authority over the coastlines of the Malay Peninsula and western Java. It was not until the eleventh century that its commercial hegemony began to be challenged. Chaotic conditions along the south coast of China following the collapse of the T'ang dynasty reduced the volume of long-distance trade, and as traffic passing through the straits declined, so did Srivijaya's revenues. The Cholas of southern India, too, resenting what they regarded as extortionate demands by Srivijaya, attacked the empire in 1025, devastating many coastal settlements on both sides of Malacca Straits. Srivijaya survived this catastrophe, but with its strength diminished. By adopting in desperation ever more arbitrary and piratical tactics it incurred the enmity of a widening circle of neighbors, and by the fourteenth century it had ceased to exist.

The chief competitors and immediate heirs of Srivijaya were the Javanese. By the eighth century Java was being ruled by the Buddhist kings of the Sailendra dynasty. Little is known in detail about the Sailendras, but their memory has been spectacularly preserved by their numerous stupas and chandis (monumental tombs) which still stand in the central Javanese plain. Of these the monument known as the Borobudur is, to the modern eye, the most impressive. At Borobudur eight interconnected stone terraces rise in pyramidal form to cap a natural hill. The five lower terraces are square-cornered, the top three circular. The inner walls of each terrace are covered with thousands of friezes sculptured in bas-relief and illustrating the texts of Mahayana Buddhism. From base to summit the structure rises to a height of more than 100 feet. A pilgrim visiting the Borobudur had to walk for nearly three miles along its terraces and pass more than four hundred images of the Buddha before he reached the summit, where, presumably, enlightenment through meditation on the lessons he had absorbed during his ascent awaited him.

In the mid-eighth century the Sailendra kings were replaced by the Sanjayas, who adopted Shaivist Hinduism as their court religion in preference to Buddhism and, like their predecessors, left many monuments in stone to testify to their beliefs. By this time, however, the political and economic center of gravity in Java was moving east. Better use of agricultural land, leading to an increase in population, and success in capturing the trade formerly controlled by Srivijaya, gradually brought east Java to the forefront. In the Brantas River valley a succession of kingdoms rose and fell over the next three centuries. The story of the founding of the last of these, Singosari, is told in the Old Javanese epic, the *Pararaton*, or Book of Kings. It was Singosari, under King Kertanagara (1268–1292), that faced the formidable challenge of a Mongol armada sent south by Kubilai Khan.

Most states in Southeast Asia maintained diplomatic relations with China, and some, as far back as Sui and T'ang times, had paid tribute in exchange for Chinese recognition and protection. But the Mongols sought more than tribute or a merely formal recognition of their superiority. They required actual submission, and were prepared to go to war to secure it, as the history of Vietnam and Burma had already borne witness. King Kertanagara of Singosari, however, resolved to defy the Mongol empire. When the Great Khan's envoys arrived in east Java in 1289, he detained them for a time in prison, and then sent them back to their master empty-handed. The Khan collected a large army and fleet and launched them against "the impudent southern barbarians" of Java in 1293.

Mongol aggression, however, was soon defeated by Javanese duplicity. Kertanagara, spurring his people on to resist the invader, had used so heavy a hand that the populace rose against him, capturing his capital city

and putting him to death. Kertanagara's son-in-law and heir, Vijaya, welcomed the Mongol commander and accepted his aid in defeating the rebels. But once Vijaya had regained the capital he turned on his allies and attacked them while they were split into small groups engaged in pacifying—on his behalf, as they supposed—the surrounding countryside. The remnants of the Mongol force fought their way to the coast, thankfully boarded their ships, and sailed back to China, never to return. The victorious Javanese king celebrated his triumph by building a new capital for his state at Majapahit.

During the fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries the empire of Majapahit ruled eastern Java and the islands of Madura and Bali, and maintained economic and diplomatic links with lesser states in the Indonesian archipelago and the Southeast Asian peninsula. It was the last, and greatest, of the Indo-Javanese kingdoms. More is known about it than any of its predecessors, chiefly because of the wealth of surviving written records, including the long epic poem known as the *Nagarakertagama*. Composed in 1365 by a Buddhist priest, the *Nagarakertagama* is a paean of praise to Gaja Mada, *mapatih* or chief minister of Majapahit from 1330 to 1364.

Gaja Mada appears on the Javanese historical scene as the commander of a royal bodyguard charged with suppressing a rebellion against the king of Majapahit in 1328. This task completed, the king repaid the devotion of his servant by stealing the latter's wife. Shortly afterward Gaja Mada prevailed on a surgeon who was operating on their royal master to allow the knife to "slip." Since the heir to the throne was a woman, he was able to seize supreme power and hold it for the next quarter of a century.

The *Nagarakertagama* portrays Gaja Mada as a master administrator. He reformed agriculture, the judiciary, the police force, and the taxation and forced labor systems. He organized a land survey and a census, and arranged for the repair of roads, bridges, and irrigation channels. He supervised the army and navy and gave instructions to diplomatic missions going to foreign lands. He even found time to issue regulations governing the terms on which pious foundations might accept gifts. There was apparently no branch of government that Gaja Mada did not personally supervise and control, and when he died in 1364 four ministers were appointed to take over his duties.

The empire of Majapahit, whose court religion was a mixture of Hinduism and Buddhism but whose people remained for the most part animists, had been founded in 1293. It was in the same decade that a new religion, Islam, gained its first foothold in Southeast Asia at Perlak on the northern coast of Sumatra. During the following two centuries Islam

spread gradually through the islands and into the Malay Peninsula. The readiest converts to the new faith proved to be the rulers of port cities and coastal principalities who derived their wealth from trade. They found that their economic interests were better served if they were of the same religion as the merchants who came to buy from them, and by this time Muslim Arabs, Persians, and Gujeratis from northern India were coming to Southeast Asia in ever increasing numbers. With wealth derived from trade the new men of Islam challenged and overthrew older interior states like Majapahit, whose revenues came chiefly from agriculture and whose world view did not extend beyond Southeast Asia. The richest and strongest of the new Muslim powers was Malacca, on the west coast of the Malay Peninsula, founded in the early fifteenth century by a refugee prince from Sumatra.

Malacca rapidly became the chief commercial emporium in Southeast Asia. Like Srivijaya before it, it lay at the junction of the Indian, China, and Java seas. To its harbor came traders from all over Asia, eager to exchange cottons, silks, and foodstuffs for the pepper, cloves, nutmegs, mace, camphor, sandalwood, pearls, aloes, benzoin, and musk that another new class, the merchant adventurers of Western Europe, were even then beginning to covet. The more the Europeans learned about Southeast Asia, the more desirable its riches seemed. When the Portuguese navigator Vasco da Gama pioneered the sea route from Europe to the Indies at the end of the fifteenth century, the Europeans prepared to make Southeast Asian trade their own.

For Further Reading

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Medieval Europe

32 The Early Middle Ages

The Middle Ages began with the decline of Rome. As early as the third century, Rome's population was dropping and her economy beginning to break down or decentralize. Her cities—focal points of culture, commerce and communication—slowly withered. The dominance of Greco-Roman civilization weakened as new forms of once-submerged local cultures began to rise. Provincial separatism threatened political unity. Men increasingly sought to secede from the coercive and unprofitable unity of the empire into what they hoped would be the wealth of independence and autarchy.

All was not disintegration, however. Rome's decline was marked by inventive periods of renascent centralism and rebuilding. One such age, that of Diocletian and Constantine (A.D. 284–337), laid the institutional foundations of the Middle Ages. Society was divided into functional orders, ranging from farmers and artisans to the honorable professions and the military and administrative elites. Each service had its rewards, its type of law—some had their own courts. Brought to defend the frontiers, foreign allies lived by their own laws under imperial protection. The medieval idea of social functional orders each having its own law was already a reality in late Roman times. Furthermore, the distinction between slave and freeman weakened. On the one hand, imperial law invaded private right, thus easing slavery; on the other, as state service was required of all, service invaded freedom. By public law, the peasant was bound to his land and the soldier to his arms. In short, although long retarded during the invasions following Rome's fall when enslaved captives again abounded, slavery and freedom both weakened. The ministerial or functionally servile character of medieval society was being born.

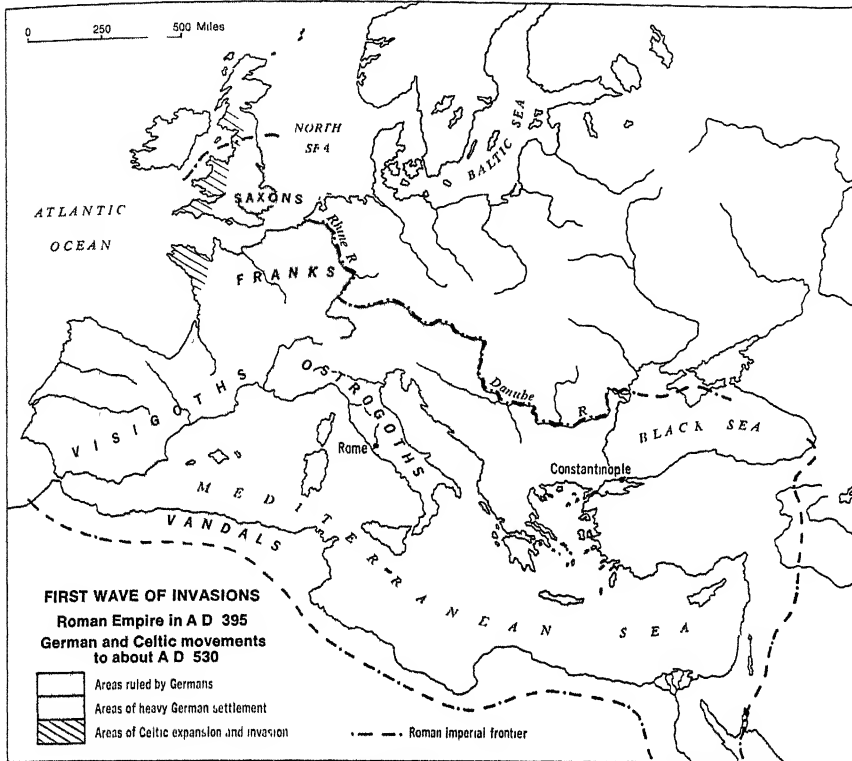
The relationship of Christianity to the empire also set the tone for the Middle Ages. After Constantine, church and state were allied. Christian monotheism canonized imperial unity, and in return, the state provided the model for church organization and law. As we shall later see, imperial

		<i>Roman and Byzantine Emperors</i>
A.D.	284–305	Diocletian
	306–337	Constantine
	527–565	Justinian I
	717–741	Leo I the Isaurian
		<i>Frankish Kings and Western Emperors (Since 800)</i>
	416–751	Merovingian house
	741–928	Carolingian house
	768–814	Charlemagne
	813–840	Louis the Pious
	876–888	Charles III the Fat
		<i>German Kings and Emperors</i>
	919–1024	Saxon or Ottonian house
	919–936	Henry I the Fowler
	936–972	Otto I
	983–1002	Otto III
	1024–1137	Salian house
		<i>French Kings</i>
	888/987 ff.	Capetian house
		<i>Roman Pontiffs</i>
	492–496	Gelasius I
	590–604	Gregory I
	858–867	Nicholas I
	1073–1085	Gregory VII
	1088–1099	Urban II
	1130–1143	Innocent II
		<i>Ecclesiastical Intellectuals</i>
	260–340	Lactantius
c.	340–420	Jerome
	354–430	Augustine
	816–840	Agobard, archbishop of Lyons
c.	810–c. 877	Johannes Scotus Erigena
	847–882	Hincmar, archbishop of Reims

Christianity was a kind of Neoplatonic naturalism, one in which the cult of the emperor and the patriotism of *Romanitas* seemed to harmonize with the faith, enabling apologists to say that the successive ages of a presumably eternal empire were similar to those of an unfolding Christian vision. On the other hand, Christianity had sprung up partly in reaction against the dominant Greco-Roman culture, as a way of setting its various subject peoples free. It is therefore not surprising that, at the very moment this religion became the premier state cult, a new form of secession, that of hermits and monks, spread throughout the Mediterranean basin. Indeed, no sooner had the church become the lesser partner of the state than it began to suffer grave divisions. In the form of the Arian heresy, an imperialist party made its appearance in 337. The Goths and the other Germans in the imperial military service soon adopted this heretical belief to set them apart from the ordinary Christians of the empire they were being called in to police. Defiance of the state church emerged in such groups as the North African Donatists (c. 311), and other regional secession early found expression in dogmatic variations. The upwelling of heresies was the religious counterpart of the civil wars that disrupted the political and economic unity of the empire.

Great though its effort had been, late Rome began to fall as separatism and withdrawal recurred with renewed vigor. What pushed the empire over the brink, however, were the cataclysmic Hunnic raids that transformed the gradual filtering of the Germans into imperial service into mass movements by whole peoples. These movements precipitated a series of invasions whose cycles lasted well into the tenth century. During the first of these cycles or waves, the Western empire ceased to exist (476), and was replaced by a group of quasi-national German kingdoms. Justinian's (527-565) great counterattack followed, its effects soon erased by the renewed German movement of the Lombards into Italy, by the Slavic irruption into the Balkans, and by the loss to Islam of Syria, Egypt, and, in the early eighth century, Spain. The rise of the Carolingian Franks in the West (750-800) and of the Isaurian emperors in Byzantium restored stability for a time. Combined with renewed Muslim incursions and new Magyar slave raids from the East, the assaults of the Scandinavians during the ninth and tenth centuries again spread destruction everywhere. On the whole, however, this later cycle was less significant than those of earlier times, and resulted in serious settlement only in the British Isles and Normandy. Thereafter, although Slavic and even Asiatic attack occasionally flicked the West's frontiers, the age of the invasions was really over. Indeed, the last of the invasions had built relatively stable states over a wide arc reaching from Scandinavia to Kiev in Russia, and had thereby eradicated the barbarism of nomadic and tribal folk from most of Europe.

During this age, a cultural, institutional, and economic scission de-



stroyed Mediterranean unity. The loss of the Balkans to the Slavs broke the bridge between the Greeks and the Latins, and, by the tenth century, Islam's domination of the western Mediterranean lessened their maritime contacts. The Greek and Latin churches also gradually drew apart. Byzantium's attempts to placate the Christians of Egypt and Syria and its later submission to Anatolic iconoclasm harmed relations with Rome. More, her inability to defend Italy against the Lombards together with the obvious advantage for missions of working with the German kingdoms inspired Rome's pontiffs to turn their attention westward. By 781 Rome ceased to date documents by the eastern emperor's regnal year and by 800 reinstituted the western empire by crowning the Frank, Charlemagne.

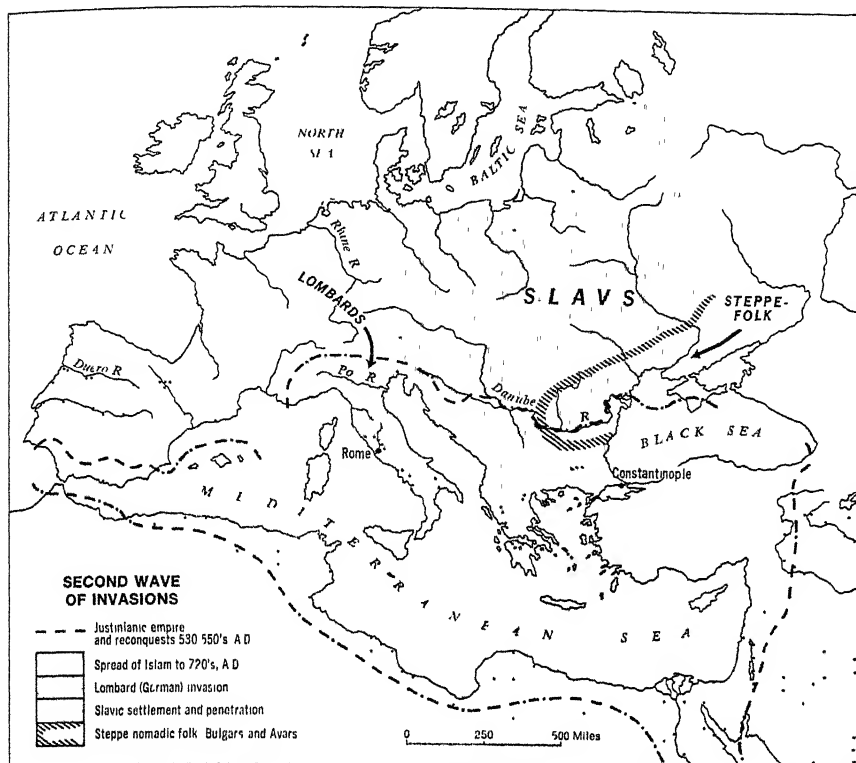
Scission was illustrated in other ways also. Each successive reconstruction of the western empire was smaller than its predecessor. Rome ruled from Britain to Syria, Charlemagne (768–814) only northwest continental Europe, much of Italy, and a sliver of Spain. Around 1000 the German empire embraced Germany and most of Italy, but, save its eastern reaches, all of France escaped its power. Although often reversed by spasmodic

rebuilding, moreover, political scission was accompanied by economic decentralization, by a partial decline in urban centers, and by a loss of knowledge and culture. Decay, in short, continued until well into the Middle Ages.

If, however, the nations and empires of the age of the invasions are examined more closely, decay is seen to be an inadequate term. Based between the Rhine and the Loire, Carolingian power ruled extensive regions in Germany well beyond Rome's ancient frontiers, and the later German empire was centered still farther eastward. By Carolingian times, although still partly found in Italy, the generative centers of Latin culture had shifted from the Mediterranean to northwest Europe, and by the end of the last wave of invasions in the tenth century relatively stable Christian monarchies had put an end to the primitive tribalism of Scandinavia and of the Slavic and Magyar peoples to the east. Also, along with Christian missions, a measure of the urban civilization of the Mediterranean had spread into these hitherto untouched areas. The age of the invasions, therefore, was not only one of decline; it was also one in which a weakened version of a once high Latin civilization spread beyond its earlier confines to eradicate Europe's ancient barbarism.

As in both Islam and Byzantium, moreover, a new culture was being created in western Europe. By Carolingian times, the Latin church provided a new sense of identity with its language, law, and theology, and had begun to unite the West's nations and peoples. In late Rome, Christianity was almost coterminous with *Romanitas*, barbarians being excluded. By 800, the main distinction was between the Christian and the non-Christian, the erstwhile barbarians having become members of the New Rome's ampler society, the Latin church. Along with this went the spread of urbanism, once limited to Rome's territories. In spite of setbacks during actual invasions, the revival of towns within the empire's frontiers and, more, the implantation of preurban nuclei beyond these bounds marked both the Carolingian and the later German empires, not to speak of Anglo-Saxon England. Nor did the men of this time merely ape antiquity. Art and architecture were self-consciously classical in style until well into the ninth century, but the basic elements of the Romanesque that flowered in the eleventh century were already being limned. Again, although much Carolingian thought merely echoed earlier Augustinian and Neoplatonic modes, the court and church of this empire produced lively theological rebels, good political minds, and the first of the medieval philosophical system builders, Johannes Scotus Erigena (c. 810–c. 877). The Carolingians, then, had all but reversed the decline begun in Rome.

The implanting of civilization required government, and the Germanic



peoples contributed much to its building. Their primitive law, involving trial by combat or ordeals and a firm sense of tribal or national identity, suited the circumstance of the age of the invasions. At first, their sense of identity was sharpened by their contact with the Romans. Their national laws were codified in the fifth and sixth centuries, and both Roman law and religious practices initially set them apart from the conquered provincials. In time, however, national identity weakened as the peoples fused together. Then Roman law and institutions no longer served only the provincials, but were also extended to the conquerors themselves. Early in the conquest, the military office of the late Roman count of the city was adopted by the successor states and thence slowly spread well beyond the frontiers of the old empire to become the basic unit of medieval local administration. The medieval manorial structure had its antecedents in Rome's latifundia. Another step in this process of adoption was the absorption of the idea of the empire by the German states. Although the high point of this capacity to transcend tribal or national units was the establishment of the western

empire under Charlemagne, the idea also informed both earlier and later attempts to unify individual nations. A Visigothic king was a kind of emperor; tenth-century kings of Wessex called themselves "emperors of England"; eleventh-century Castilian princes claimed to be emperors of Spain.

Monarchy was the typical form of government of the early Middle Ages. Derived from German institutions and Roman imperial traditions, early medieval monarchy tended toward dynastic transmission and, when it was successful, toward single succession. Such was the strength of localism, however, that the invasion age was over before it was possible to eradicate the impediment caused by the regular subdivision of inheritances among a prince's successors. Besides, the growth of the dynastic tradition was slowed by the existence among both the Germans and the Romans of the idea that a senate, or better, that the army or the people in arms, had the power to elect its prince. Although elements of this electoral idea persisted everywhere, triumphed in Spain's Visigothic state, and were revived among the later Carolingians to become the standard pattern for the medieval German empire, dynastic succession slowly gained ground, principally because of the need for a political office that transcended any particular social, regional, tribal, or national group. In a time of invasions and severe cultural shock, when new political units were being constituted and when hitherto strange and often hostile peoples were thrown together, a dynastic prince was required to arbitrate or still conflicts.

It was a mark of the early medieval state that its princes, although sprung from particular peoples (*nationes*), soon transcended national limitations. The Carolingians were Franks, and the rise of their empire may be fairly described as the conquest of much of Western Europe by that people, but the peak of Carolingian power saw not only the reintroduction of the imperial idea, but also the employment of Englishmen, Spaniards, Italians, and other Germans in imperial service. As a result, although not completely, because it did not include all of Latin Europe, this empire set normative patterns for the whole of medieval governmental, legal, and social institutions.

The whole structure of law had begun to change. Before the invasions, the Germans maintained peace within their tribes or nations by means of the solidarity of extended family groups. Matters were settled between them by compensation and only rarely, as in wartime, by princes or priests acting for the nation as a whole. During the invasions and subsequent settlement, however, when families were uprooted and broken up, and when peoples with their own laws were mixed together, a new law to police their relationships was called for. This law was naturally administered by the new prince. Following Roman legal tradition, the prince's law was a common law, one that transcended tribal, national, and family groups alike

by accenting the responsibility of the individual and reducing the protection given him by his nation's law or by his family.

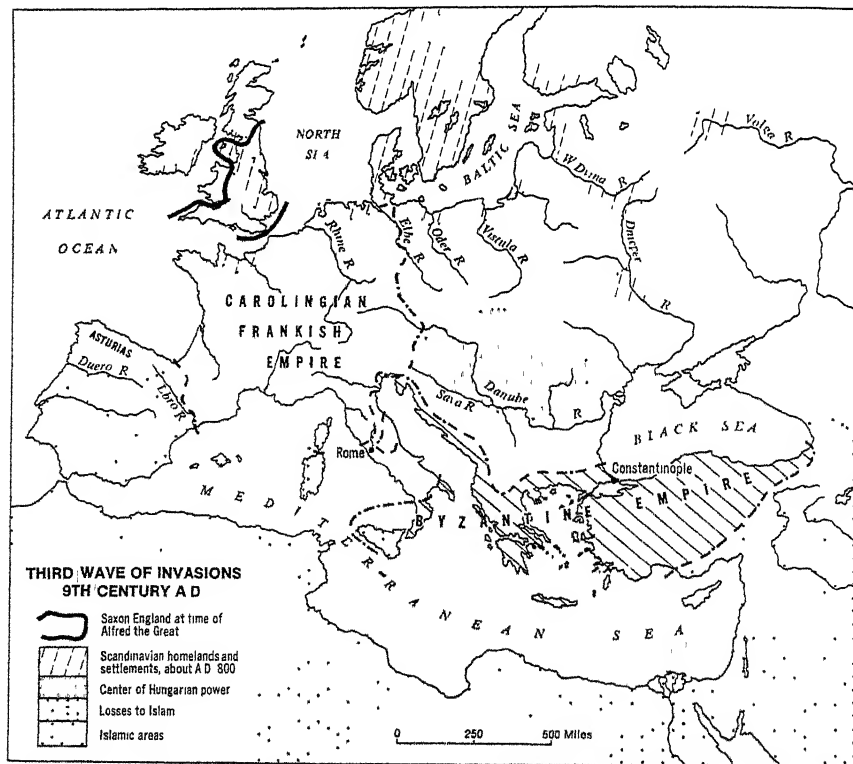
The new princes and kings everywhere sought to create hierarchies of officers loyal to themselves. All society was to be divided into groups performing duties ranging from the farmer's drudgery to the counsel offered a prince by a high officer. Originating in late Rome's functional orders, the ancient articulation of society into many social groups gradually simplified during the early Middle Ages to the point where it seemed useful to classify complex reality under three grand headings, the economic (*laboratores*), the administrative or martial (*bellatores*), and the ecclesiastical (*oratores*). With this, moreover, went a full measure of the idea of the ministry or duty (*ministerium*) of those who served prince and society, a conception that evoked a service ethos which marked all of Europe's aristocracies and even peoples throughout the Middle Ages. In this period, however, service to a prince or to his officers was the main way of climbing into the aristocracy. Obversely, when a new service cadre was being built, old local aristocracies were often absorbed or obliterated. Among these were the ancient German and Nordic sacral nobilities and the Roman provincial senatorial aristocracies.

Peculiar to the service personnel of this age, and, to some degree, to their successors throughout the Middle Ages, was the degree to which personal allegiance bound them together. This partly derived from the near-synonymy of public and private institutions among the primitive Germans, but it also reflected the tendency to confuse these areas evidenced in Rome long before it fell. The officer's oath to the emperor, the expansion of the client-to-patron relationship in the late empire, and the growth within and without the Roman army of armed clienteles bound to commanders or great families—groups analogous to the retinues of Germanic and later Nordic war leaders—are evidences of this tendency. In addition, the German and Roman system of clientage had, in both origin and growth, elements of servility and freedom, the first accenting duties and service, and the second, right and privilege. So efficacious for maintaining peace and social solidarity was this system of binding *iuniores* to *seniores* or men to masters that the Carolingians and many much later princely houses sought to extend it to all their subjects in spite of strong opposition both aristocratic and plebeian.

Although real, the triumph of the service ethos and of social hierarchy under a prince was mitigated by both political principles and firmly rooted interests. Enshrined, for example, in a Frankish edict of 609, the principle that judges or counts were to be chosen from the areas in which they were to exercise office derived from Roman practice and canon law. That officers should have tenure and not lose the fruits of service at the whim of

princes was known to the Romans, Visigoths, and Franks. Furthermore, the idea that officers exercising a *ministerium* were judged upon performance had also long been applied to princes and even to dynasties. A pope used this argument to justify the Carolingian replacement of the Merovingian house in 752, and in 833 the magnates and bishops used it to depose Charlemagne's successor, Louis the Pious. Closely related to this principle was the right of magnates to elect their prince, a practice, as noted on page 369, used by the Visigoths, and others thereafter. Lastly, derived from Roman and German antecedents, magnates and prelates often exercised their authority in councils where, as was stated in an assembly at Pitres in 864, law or judgment was promulgated by a prince with the consent of the magnates and the people.

The service elites included churchmen, members of an institution that had grown apace during the collapse of Rome and later invasions. Shielding the conquered provincials and serving as a refuge for Rome's fading aristocracies, the church absorbed the traditions of Rome's government. In



spite of the enduring vigor of the classical idea of lay education, the initial illiteracy of the Germans and the frequent disruptive invasions gradually gave the church a near-monopoly of literacy and of learning in law and government. As a result, the church helped to equip Europe's new states with their constitutions and legal systems, serving, indeed, as a model for them. If princes tried to build nonhereditary service cadres, the church did better with its celibate bishops. Where direct contact with Rome was weak, as in England, or nonexistent, as in Scandinavia, forms of salary and tenure used by the church for its clergy provided models for secular offices. The idea of the *ministerium* described above was also reinforced by a church whose notion of office was firmly based upon the fitness of an individual, and not of a family. Lastly, while princes invaded the jurisdictional community of the extended family or of national and tribal groups by insisting upon the individual's responsibility for certain crimes, the church had long since gone further by holding each man penitentially accountable for all his actions.

The reinforcement of the state by the church was especially strong along the expanding frontier of Latin civilization, a fact which helps to explain why, during the early Middle Ages, Europe's northern and eastern governments often possessed a cohesion lacking in those of its more central and southern parts. Heir to the cultural intolerance of the classical world, the church rejected the tribalism, family conceptions, and religions of the barbarians and, to effect their conversion, aided emerging emperors and princes to build their states. Each successive wave of invasions, the earlier German or later Nordic, provoked the appearance of new empires or nations, and each saw the conversion of the invaders and of their homelands. The new Christian princes were exalted by being in a universal cult, associated with no one region or people. Suitably enough, in the time of Carolingian greatness, Agobard of Lyons (c. 779-840) pleaded for the unity of all Christians under one prince and one law in a tract that attacked primitive German law. Augmenting their power, the new princes fought local nobilities or tribal or national chieftains; so did the clergy because these were initially bound to pagan cults. The defeat of the ancient gods, therefore, was equally profitable to prince and church. First regularized by the Visigoths, the revival of the priest's unctioning of kings, with its baptismal and ordinative qualities, aptly symbolized the religious authentication of princely might. Furthermore, the ancient idea that kings were themselves priestly spread through the West, making a prince the administrative head of his church and director of its apostolate.

This religious conception of the highest lay office derived from the Constantinian partnership of church and state, and from the parallel absorption of Neoplatonic thought by the church. Even in Augustine

(354–430), this was partly a naturalist philosophy. It stressed the excellence of God's creations, and the consequent material absence of evil in nature. As part of nature, man was capable of goodness, his passion designed to people heaven with saints, his reason to make him harmonize with God's and nature's good. In social terms, this good was order, peace on earth wherein man could be educated to Christ. The maintenance of this peace gilded all of man's institutions, including his monarchies and even his swords, with reflected divine light. From Lactantius (260–340) of Constantine's time to the so-called Norman Anonymus of the late eleventh century, men of this persuasion believed the spheres of heaven and earth to be so closely intertwined that the notion of surrendering a man's body to the keeping of his government while giving over his soul to his church seemed absurd. Although to such men the spiritual was superior to the material since it was the end to which all effort tended, the two spheres were not separable—nor were the institutions that advanced their causes.

This alliance of church and state, however, was marked by ambivalence. Princes, for example, were at least vestigially secular or tolerant about religion. Jews were citizens under Rome and remained so under the German princes. Save in seventh-century Spain, where a rising tide of Semitized urbanism announced Islam's forthcoming invasion, Jews were protected, often indeed privileged, and clerical complaints made little impression on princes who needed their useful mercantile and administrative services. Even later, during Castile's revival of the imperial dream, the conqueror of Toledo in 1085 styled himself emperor of the two religions when writing to Muslims, and an eleventh-century count of Barcelona promised fair justice to Christian, Muslim, Jew, and heretic alike. This measure of tolerance displeased the clergy and their followers. Not that they wished to convert others by force. That was rare, if only because it made the church's advance so clearly depend upon the secular sword. Instead, from late Rome on, ecclesiastical liberty was defined as the monopoly of the right to convert and to prevent the loss of believers into heresy or another religion.

There was also a deeper source of the Christian's rejection of the naturalist philosophy or attitude described above. Because his cult was in its origin partly a way of resisting a chauvinistic Greco-Roman culture with its accent upon civic pride and duty and upon bodily and mental education, many an early Christian saw little good in health, learning, or service to society, asserting that he had seceded not only from the state, but also from the people. Later on, the monks of the Constantinian age continued some of this tradition. They left the world and gave up its pleasures, but they also made sure that they were relieved of their duties to family or to civil or military service. This withdrawal from life paralleled an intellectual urge to

extol heaven and deprecate the world. Although some still asserted man's innate capacity to attain a part of the divine good, the greater Latin fathers, Augustine and Jerome (c. 340–420), insisted upon man's natural inadequacy, and his need for God's grace. As the agency of grace, the church, to such men, was clearly superior to the state. Although according to Gelasius I (492–496), the priest and the prince divided the world's government, this pope did not doubt that the former judged the latter. On the other hand, the disruptive strength of these ideas could not yet be fully exploited. In an age of invasions and mass defections to Islam, the church needed the civil sword. Again, until most of Europe had become Christian, the church gained much by its alliance with the state. Long ago, Augustine had set its tone, first by regretfully permitting and then by demanding the exercise of religious coercion by the state against the Donatist heretics.

Albert reluctantly, then, the partnership of state and church and the presidency of the former was generally admitted in the West during the invasion age. All the same, the cultural identity of the West was largely supplied by the church. By the early ninth century, Arabic, Greek, and Latin demarcated not only three separate cultures but also differences in the relationship of the church to the state in the three areas. Under Islam the two were nearly indistinguishable. Among the Greeks, especially under the iconoclast emperors, the church was subordinate to the prince. Although in the West, Visigothic kings were the apostles of their nation's church, and Frankish and later German emperors headed their clergy, the Latin mind was convinced that the church was wholly autonomous spiritually, and Charlemagne's own court clergy attacked the meddling of Greek emperors in theological matters. This restive independence was earlier observable in Gregory I (590–604), who, as a Roman, dealt carefully with the Eastern emperor, but did not hesitate to threaten Western princes with losing their offices were they to contravene church law. Perhaps, also, the Roman's rage at having been conquered by barbarians was expressed by the hostility of his church toward German culture. Whereas unconquered Greece welcomed into its liturgy the languages of the peoples its preachers converted, Latin not only monopolized the cult, but also, after the Carolingian reform, vigorously suppressed German vernacular literature, first in Germany itself, and then, far later, in England and Scandinavia.

The day of the church, however, had yet to come. Still sometimes looking to Byzantium for aid and inspiration, the Roman see did not yet really head the Latin communion. Local churches were often almost independent bodies, and frequently superior to Rome in doctrinal culture and learning. They were also usually dominated by their princes, who appointed the higher clergy and called their councils. Nor was the notion of

citizenship in Christ yet sufficiently strong to subordinate older secular ideas. That, for example, Christendom was not coterminous with citizenship is amply shown by the privileged status of Jews under the Carolingian and later German emperors. The persistent strength of secular ecumenical ideas, such as that of the empire, still competed with the churchman's Christendom. Although a pope claimed the right to grant the empire, the idea of universal monarchy was still attractive quite apart from its religious attachments.

Thus constituted, the empires and greater kingdoms along Europe's frontiers were characteristic of the age of the invasions. Almost all, however, eventually collapsed. The greatest was the Carolingian, and its history is an example, though a not quite typical one, of the fate of the others. In the ninth century, Nordic, Magyar, and Muslim invaders ravaged its land, but not everything can be blamed on them. The earlier Carolingian imperialism of the Franks had taught them much. In Scandinavia, the Carolingian state and church provided a model for the new kingship and its centralizing agencies that expropriated quasi-sacral kinglets and tribal nobilities. It was these who emigrated, hoping to return home to their "rightful" place, but often destined to fail or to find empire abroad. Furthermore, the invasions did not always disrupt large states. True, in regions like France and the Low Countries, where dukes and counts made bastions of their small realms, the best defense was local. Elsewhere, however, as in Germany, barbarian raids provoked the building of a new empire during the tenth century. In short, although terrible, the invasions were not a prime cause of Carolingian disintegration.

More significant was a repetition of the process of scission whose origins have been seen in Roman times. Dormant while the Carolingians were successful, this divisive urge had not been eradicated. Charlemagne's house had inherited the usual problem of the relationship of the head of state to his service cadre: the servitor sought to amplify his rights, while the prince emphasized his service. From Rome onward, the danger here was that tenure in office, imitating that of the monarch himself, could become hereditary. This tendency had been arrested when the Carolingians gained power. A massive expropriation of church property had enabled them to build an army whose triumphs had provided advancement abroad for the scions of established families and for new recruits, thus exalting service and depressing right. Expansion necessarily slowed down, however, partly because the empire's threatened neighbors learned to resist by imitating its institutions, and partly because, by its victories, the empire soon reached the limit imposed by the technological level of the time upon transport and communication. In this circumstance, privilege began to

prevail over service among the imperial officers and soldiery. In 877, for example, in order to mount an expedition to Italy and to settle the succession upon his son, the emperor Charles the Fat was obliged to allow his officers the right to be succeeded by their sons. By 900, this right had become customary in most of France's duchies and counties. When higher officers exacted hereditary succession, the prince attempted to win the loyalty of their subordinates by granting them the same right. Subvassals eventually came to enjoy hereditary succession to office and salary, but with little advantage for the prince, whose call for loyalty was rarely heard at their level in time to restore his power.

This fact shows that the drive toward establishing hereditary right to office reflected general social aspirations and economic patterns more than the magnates' desire to usurp their posts. Although the spread of civilization and consequent economic growth had inspired centralization in the primitive lands beyond Rome's ancient frontiers and had even provoked significant renewals in areas within those bounds, the general movement of society still continued to be toward political decentralization and economic autarchy. This being the case, at a time when monarchy by dynastic succession was the normal form of government, the claim to a peculiar and innate liberty by families of traditional leadership seemed to be the firmest guarantee of local society's freedom from outside demands. On a higher level, from Roman times on, this freedom had been partly won by the division of a realm among a ruler's successors, a practice that led, in the Carolingian age, to the emergence of effectively independent subkingdoms and, in eleventh-century France, to the devolution of royal power to dukes, counts and even seigniors.

The dissolution of central power was also more than an expression of local separatism. If all the arts of civil sedition had been explored before the Carolingians lost out in France and Germany between 887 and 987, the constitutional and other principles adduced above convinced magnates and churchmen that they were working not only for their own good but also for the rights of others. An example may be seen in the clergy's search for freedom. From Charlemagne's day on, churchmen sought to "reform" the church. Royal councils must not determine doctrine. Princes must neither appoint nor judge prelates, and the lesser clergy should be free from control by local notables. Monks should abjure the world, and secularly minded clergy should be purged. Churchmen also actively intervened in deposing Louis the Pious in 833, and, in the mid-ninth century, Nicholas I (858-867) asserted papal authority with astonishing vigor. Profiting from civil war, Nicholas anathematized a king of Lotharingia, attacked the customary independence of the local churches, and denounced lay domination of the church, urging bishops to wield effectively the two swords,

spiritual and material. When the mutual anathemas launched by Rome and Constantinople over the Balkans are added, the revolutionary tone of the later Gregorian age seems not too far away.

This ecclesiastical attempt at freedom had unanticipated results. Churchmen could neither foresee the new invasions nor perceive that their efforts would encourage political decentralization. No sooner had they spoken out than they began to suffer from the anarchy of the times and from subordination to local lay authority. They therefore slowly reversed their stand and tried to rebuild an authority they had irreparably weakened. Plagued by Muslim raids and civil war, Nicholas I's successors turned now to fading Frankland, now to Byzantium, in a vain attempt to police and protect central Italy. In Frankland, Hincmar of Reims' (847-882) mid-ninth-century aerial act, balancing his affirmation of ecclesiastical liberty against his defense of the Carolingian state, was no more successful.

Elsewhere, however, particularly along Europe's frontiers, the old way soon reasserted itself. The German church succeeded where Hincmar had failed precisely because it subordinated itself in order to rebuild the empire. From the council of Hohenaltheim in 918 through the Ottonian and early Salian houses, this church became the firm support of a renewed empire. Its monasteries served as academies for an imperial prelature, and its bishops were appointed by the court, frequently from the blood royal. Secular administration, first of towns and then of whole counties, was entrusted to the imperial bishops of Germany and Lombardy, who had no progeny to inherit their offices, and a large part of the army was normally raised from ecclesiastical benefices.

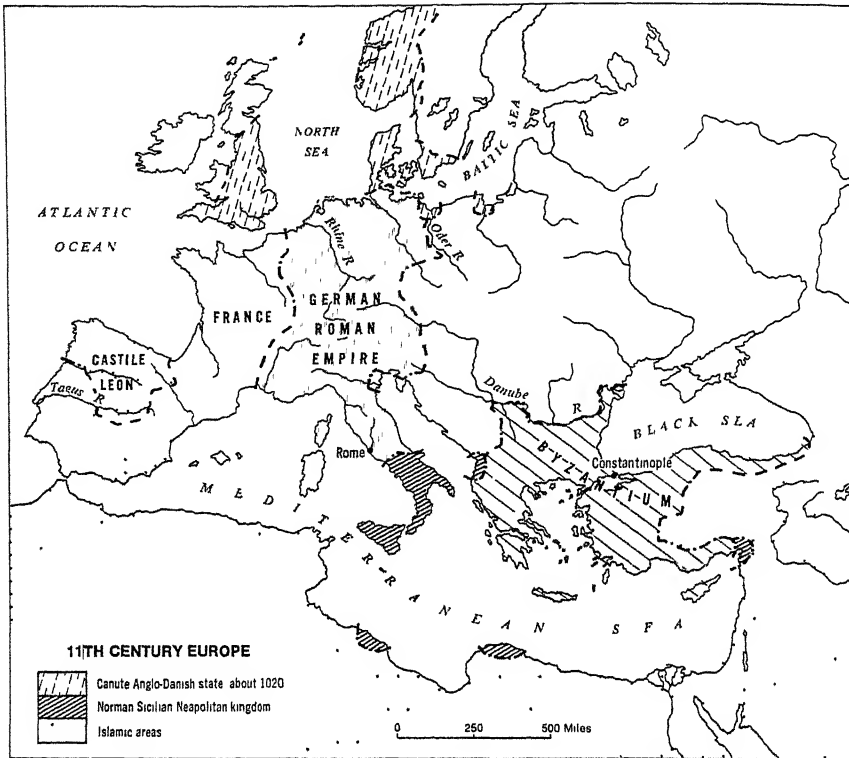
A new empire had been fashioned, one whose achievement was not limited to bringing the local church to heel. Its chiefs also built a new service cadre, which, early seen in Henry the Fowler's (919-936) frontier militia, flowered into the servile or nonhereditary *ministeriales* of the Salian period. Of course, these institutions were not unique to Germany. Other princes, even the weak Capetians (beginning 987) of France, controlled their local churches and were served by a dependent soldiery and officialdom. But the empire's controls were greater, and its reach wider than those of any other state. In fact, after the late-tenth-century reconquest of Italy, the Roman church bowed to German power for the first time. The Donation of Constantine, that papal claim to supremacy over western secular authority, had been received silently by the Carolingians, but was called a fraud by Otto III. If a Carolingian had judged the fitness of a pope for his office, the later Germans treated Rome much like an ordinary imperial see. From 966 onward, they appointed foreigners to Rome and even deposed three rival Italians at Sutri in 1046. Rome was also penetrated by northern doctrine at this time. Widely accepted in the northern churches from Carolingian days,

the *filioque* clause—an attempt of the Latins to claim an orthodoxy superior to that of the Greeks—was finally admitted into the Roman creed just a few years before a Lorrainer cardinal deposited the bull that broke Rome's link to Constantinople in 1054

Although great, the empire suffered from fatal weaknesses. Even in Germany, imperial power was not broadly enough based. It relied too much upon the church. Furthermore, its *ministeriales* were thought servile largely because the older service groups were already so free, constituting an aristocracy capable of resisting the emperors and of imitating them by building its own ministerial cadres. The empire was also too small. West of the Rhine and the Rhone, its hold was weak and most of France escaped its sway. Italy had fallen to the empire in the late tenth century largely because of the natives' desire to rid themselves of the Burgundians, but French pressure was resumed early in the next century by the Normans in southern Italy. Since the larger part of western Europe lay outside the empire, moreover, German domination of the universal Roman church was both anomalous and unforgivable. This fact explains why the churchmen of the later Gregorian age were able to go beyond the balanced views of the past and state their position of the relationship of the spiritual to the temporal power in extreme terms.

Even before that revolutionary age, churchmen had begun to grasp their opportunity. Illustrative of the often inadvertent way in which they acted was the Cluniac monastic movement founded in 910. Rising when the church was ruled by secular princes, Cluny modeled itself upon contemporary institutions, holding in lordship its churches and monasteries and unhesitatingly invading episcopal rights if it was in its interest. Nor, so long as its ends were served, did Cluny oppose secular might. Indeed, because its monks owed the empire much, Cluny even stood aside during the later revolutionary days of the Gregorians. Basically, however, these Benedictines pointed in a new direction. In France and elsewhere, for example, Cluny's partners were often new local princely or seignorial families. To these Cluny applied the traditions of royal dynastic burials and commemorative services, thereby corroborating the rise to power of these local lines. It also restored church unity, partly by its own monarchical structure of government and Europe-wide unity and partly by its direct affiliation to St. Peter's at Rome rather than to the local bishops. Linking local princelings or seignorial lines to the ecumenical church, Cluny had bypassed the premier governmental institutions of the age of the invasions: the empire, the nation, and their dependent local churches.

What Cluny began, the papacy completed. The century beginning about 1050 experienced a revolution in which the papacy replaced imperial and national princes as the leader of Europe, thereby creating the Christian



republic dimly envisaged in earlier times. First came preparatory steps: the break with Byzantium, papal sanction for holy wars, the loss of imperial control of papal elections, and rigorist attacks upon old ecclesiastical customs, such as clerical marriage, venality of office, and secular appointment. The struggle reached revolutionary proportions under Gregory VII (1073–1085) and Urban II (1088–1099). In the name of ecclesiastical freedom, “reformers” battled the old state churches and, when resisted, incited laymen to reject their sacraments and to expel their clergy. Anathemas released service cadres from their obedience to princes, thus encouraging the devolution of political power described above. The ensuing civil war rent Europe, leading to a reaction in which the church’s tiller was returned to the moderate hands of men like Bernard, abbot of Clairvaux (1115–1153) and Innocent II (1130–1143). By this time, however, although much of the old church remained, clerical freedom had triumphed, all of Europe’s nations had been severely shaken, and the German empire had begun its slow descent. An alliance of the ecumenical elements in the

church, headed by the papacy, with the aristocracies of town and countryside, had defeated or diminished the power of emperors and kings. The power structure characteristic of the high Middle Ages had been built.

Further reading suggestions follow chapter 34.

33 The High Middle Ages

As the new structure emerged, the age-old pattern of decentralization gradually gave way to growth and recentralization. The process began in the tenth century and, although occasionally slowed by depression cycles, continued into the fourteenth. Both in the Mediterranean basin and, via the Varangian Russian route, in the Baltic and North seas, this renewal was partly stimulated by the initially more mature economies of Byzantium and Islam. Of more consequence, however, was the renaissance within the West itself. Perhaps decentralization ceased because the size of the political and economic unity—the rural seignior or small town—had become as small as the West's technical and intellectual inheritance permitted. Not every community could profitably mint its own coins or supply itself with metalware, salt, or millstones. But there was also something positive: an increase of population and of technical improvement in agriculture, transport, and the use of natural power. To implant and promote these improvements, however, social agencies were required. In part, the old royal or imperial states of the invasion age performed this function. In wide areas, however, these were replaced by the newer regional principalities: Flanders, Normandy, Catalonia. More general than either and more intense in its capacity to mobilize society was the petty rural seignior and small town. But these, we may be sure, would have created little but anarchy had they not been allied to a grander body, the ecumenical church.

Churchmen intervened in many ways. Bishops often played the role of princes or seigniors. More inventive were the monks. Since the foundation of Cluny in 910, they were arrayed in groups and orders that reached beyond the frontiers of the dioceses, often extending through the whole of the Latin West, thus enabling them to mobilize resources on a grand scale. Until the mid-twelfth century, the main source of land credit was mortgage loans supplied by monasteries. In partnership with new princes and seigniors, Cluny revived the older centers of Western settlement. Around 1100, a host of new orders, Cistercians, Templars, Premonstratensians,

		<i>Roman Pontiffs</i>
A.D.	1198–1216	Innocent III
	1294–1303	Boniface VIII
	1316–1334	John XXII
		<i>German Emperors</i>
	1138–1268	Hohenstaufen house
	1212–1250	Frederick II
	1268	Death of Conradin
	1314–1347	Louis of Bavaria, Wittelsbach
		<i>English and French Princes</i>
	1154 ff.	England's Angevine house
	987–1328	France's Capetians
	1285–1314	Philip IV the Fair
	1266/1268 ff	Anjou cadet line in Sicily-Naples
		<i>Orders of the Church</i>
	910	Cluny (reformed Benedictine)
	1098	Cistercian order
	1118/1128	Templars (military order)
	1120	Premonstratensians (canons-regular)
	1201	Humiliati (quasi-mendicant)
	1209	Franciscans (mendicant)
	1215	Dominicans (mendicant)
		<i>Churchmen and Intellectuals</i>
	1079–1142	Peter Abelard
	1090–1153	Bernard of Clairvaux
	1126–1198	Averroes
c.	1130–1202	Joachim of Fiore
	1225–1274	Thomas Aquinas
		<i>Church Councils</i>
	1179	III Lateran
	1215	IV Lateran
	1245	I Lyon
	1274	II Lyon
	1311	Viennne

carried the expansion into a second and greater stage, moving capital and personnel from old communities and enterprises to new ones throughout Europe. The religious, in short, supplemented the intense local mobilization of seigniorship and town with an ecumenical capitalization.

Assembled in councils, moreover, the churchmen who invented the ideal of the *pax Dei* during the late tenth and early eleventh centuries showed that their church was also capable of policing them by substituting for the failing empires or monarchies of the invasion age. The *pax* flourished precisely where central government was weak, and where the jealous particularism of seigniorship and town might have made life impossible. Before splitting into its component parts, the law of the peace touched everything, protecting merchants and farmers, regulating debts, just price, and sound coinage, and accentuating the social duty of the knight or soldier. More, since peace within is wedded to war without, the *pax* stimulated aggression. In towns around 1100, it unified the community, brigading it to seek freedom from its rulers, serving sometimes to precipitate revolution, sometimes to repair revolution's wounds. Again, in 1095, a council busy with peace legislation saw Urban II launch the first crusade to "recover" Jerusalem, the end of a century-long evolution of the *pax dei* into the *bellum romanum*. In brief, the Latin church lifted a localist society out of itself and sent it forward into the world about it. And, as a consequence, Rome, the papal see, became Europe's capital.

In replacing emperors and kings, the popes were aided by the rural seigniorship or small town. The devolving of state power, first upon kinglets, then upon counts or dukes, and finally, as in twelfth-century France, upon local families, had made these latter the chiefs of minuscule states. No mere landlord, a seignior did not simply exploit private lands; he governed something public, a whole community. In return, he profited from the village church, courts, common economic facilities, and labor and taxes for common causes. Seigniors sought to reduce all inhabitants to being equal members of a community, equal in service. Deprived of access to courts beyond the seigniorship's frontiers, freemen became villeins, inhabitants of the jurisdictional area of the *villa*. At the same time, the Roman private slave disappeared, ascending into villeinage. Other institutions, such as the German extended family and the national laws known since antiquity, weakened or disappeared.

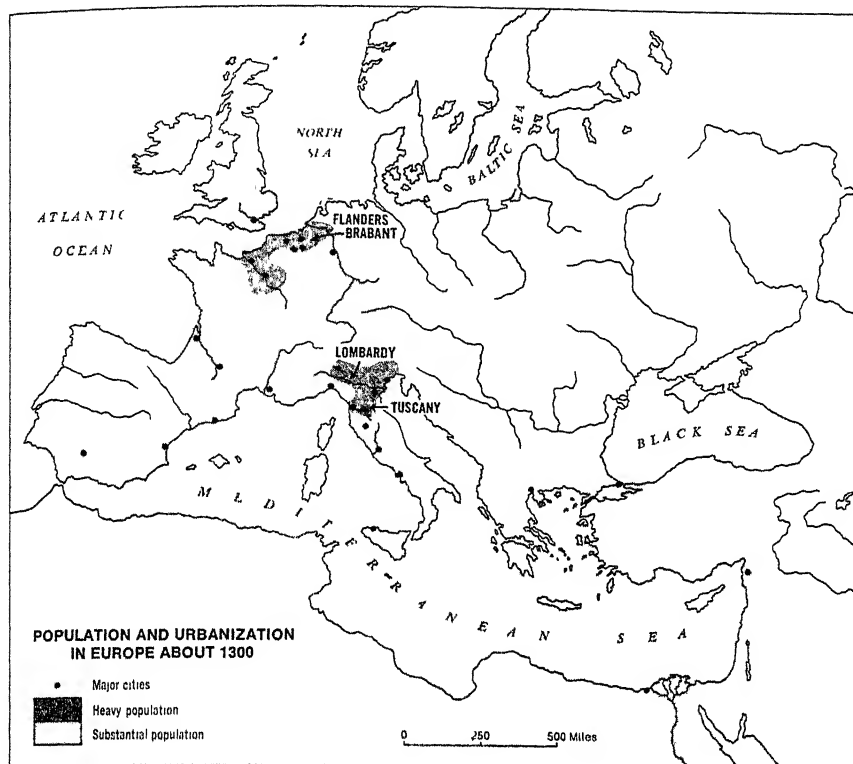
This description is necessarily oversimplified. Even in France, north and central Italy, and some adjacent areas in Germany and Spain, where the rural seigniorship was early developed, differing degrees of servitude long remained and real slavery continued on Europe's frontiers from Scandinavia to the borders with Islam. Nor did community unity ever wholly include the clergy, the martial or governing elite, or others under special

law, such as merchants and Jews. Finally, although seignorial taxes and controls on marriage, inheritances, and residence were also known there, towns differed from rural seignories. Being larger than villages, their history was more lively, and, because larger numbers of knights or merchants resided there, seignory in town earlier had a collective or political cast. Dissimilarities aside, however, whenever rural seignory or town unity created a community, a common law or custom appeared, one that implicitly set bounds to seignorial authority. At first in the town but finally also in the village, this stage was followed by one in which the inhabitants sought to participate in the exercise of judicial and political power. It is noteworthy, however, that where the authority of a unitary state remained vigorous, as in Germany's central reaches or in England, the evolution of this sense of community was slowed and town and village liberties did not grow so rapidly. But these were not the regions celebrated for cultural or other innovation during the high Middle Ages.

Beginning around 1000 and continuing almost to 1350, then, two powers, one ecumenical and the other local, led Europe's rise. This rise cost foreigners dearly. By 1250, Islam had lost all of Spain save Granada. By 1300, as they rose to dominate Baltic and North Sea trade, the Germans had pushed beyond the Elbe, seizing the Baltic littoral and settling in both Poland and Hungary. More dramatic were the major crusades that swept the Muslim from the central and eastern Mediterranean and established Latin beachheads from Syria to Tripoli. Admittedly, the Latins lost much to counterattacks, including Jerusalem, but when the assault was resumed shortly before 1200, Byzantium with the Aegean and Black seas fell to them, and Islam slowly ceded the western Mediterranean, including the Balearics. Aided by the Mongol irruption, Latin merchants and missions also penetrated the Near East and even Asia.

Though less spectacular, Europe's internal growth was far more significant. Drainage pushed the northern oceans back, and, by 1300, all the major river valleys, from the Po to the Garonne and eastward to the Elbe, had been cleared. The incomparably rich northern plain stretching from England into Germany was gradually shorn of its primeval forest. In spite of the already clear superiority of northern over southern productivity, however, the potentiality of this region was not yet fully realized, except in north France and Flanders. Although cheaper than in antiquity, overland transport remained expensive, and the easy shipping of the Mediterranean still enabled her naturally poorer areas, especially favored Italy, to support a relatively larger population.

This expansion was accompanied by the growth of towns. From before 1000, urban renewal was evident everywhere, although inland towns seemed to forge ahead at first. Cologne, for example, was, until about

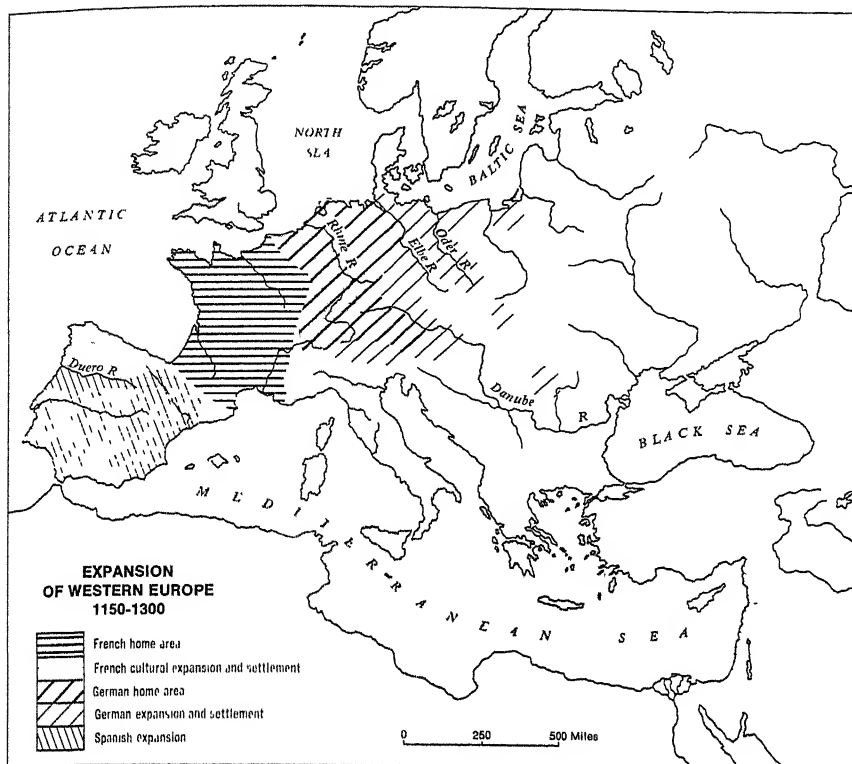


1200, the largest city in northern Europe. The towns of France's central highlands early created an infectious vocabulary that spread the words "bourg" and "bourgeois" everywhere. By 1300, however, areas favored by geography had moved ahead. The towns of Flanders and Brabant had outstripped their rivals on the Rhine and Meuse and, with their export woollens, had become the largest industrial complex in northern Europe. Italy's advance was equally dramatic: Milan, Venice, Florence, and Genoa had populations approaching 100,000, and, as in Flanders, each was surrounded by so many smaller towns that Lombardy and north central Italy were dominated by urban life in an almost modern manner. Yet, lacking really unified or national states, medieval society possessed nothing analogous to the *megalopolis* of antiquity or to early modern national capitals. Indeed, the large village or small town was typical of urban life in this age: a market, a church, and a jurisdictional area were the usual constituent elements of both town and village. Although large cities were interested in sanitation, housing, public building, and aesthetic unity, overall planning

was usually restricted to new settlements, necessarily of modest size. These, starting about 1100 and reaching from Spain to trans-Elbian Germany, introduced the right-angle grid form, a layout often extended to the fields outside town and village walls

Town and village were close not only in physical structure but also in their interests. During this age of economic expansion, towns often showed neighboring villages the way to freedom and sometimes helped them to gain it. Often, as in eastern Germany, urbanization forwarded immigration and the settlement of the land. But town and village were also far apart. If townsmen often farmed and villagers mined and manufactured, specialization separated the two, one being more industrial and the other more agricultural. Besides, the town was a better focus of communications, hence of government and of all sorts of techniques. It was also either initially larger or growing more rapidly, and hence more powerful. A result was that, as each tried to increase the profit derived from its specialties, combat between town and countryside became an essential ingredient of medieval life, one often illustrated by townsmen's attempts to extend their rule over nearby villages under the guise of freeing them from their lords. Similar combats also took place between areas of high urbanization and those providing raw materials. Aquitaine and England supplied the cloth towns of Flanders, and since the sovereign of Flanders was the French king, the French and English houses were forever embroiled. Similarly, Sicily and Apulia provided much of the grain and other commodities needed by north Italy's burgeoning cities, a fact that led to wars between the two parts of the peninsula. Involving popes, emperors, and other nations, these struggles were stilled only by the reduction of the south and the smashing of her unity shortly before 1300.

A striking aspect of the Latin age of expansion was the role played by the French and Italians. In the eleventh century, the French invaded Germanic areas in England, the Low Countries, and Lorraine, and even settled as far east as Hungary. Until about 1200, Spain's defeat of Islam depended on French immigration. Frenchmen were also Europe's foremost Crusaders, and their law and institutions took root in the Near East from the Holy Land to Greece. By the mid-thirteenth century, French was spoken from Jerusalem to Dublin, and Spanish, German, English, and even Italian literature and architecture were modeled on France's Gothic styles. As for the Italians, although French culture produced the age's first great ecclesiastical academies at Paris and Oxford, they founded the first two secular professions, law and medicine, which then spread slowly throughout Europe. Individually small, the Italian urban republics, allies of the papacy in its struggles against German dominance, created governments whose tightness and complexity far surpassed the loose structure of



Europe's monarchies. Italian sea power swept Islam and Byzantium from the Mediterranean and Black seas. By 1300, Lombard merchant-bankers had penetrated the Near East, North Africa, and much of Europe, from England to the Rhine and Danube and on to Constantinople.

Not that all was bliss in Italy and France. The former lacked the strength to free herself from her neighbors. In the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Norman French helped drive out the Greeks and Muslims, and in the thirteenth, the French house of Anjou finally crushed the German Hohenstaufen. Although thirteenth-century France was a relatively peaceful land, constant minor warfare between the Capetians and their greater vassals, especially the Angevins, marred the twelfth century, and the early thirteenth saw the conquest of southern France by the north. Again, the Germans played a diminishing role in Italy, France, and the Crusades largely because they were busy settling their own north and east. As this slow change in the movements of peoples shows, the age of invasions was finally over. Although a preliminary and brief reversal of the

invasion pattern had taken place in Carolingian times, the Germans had generally moved toward France and Italy until about 1000. Thereafter, a great reversal sent them and their neighbors toward Europe's peripheries, incidentally setting the stage for French and Italian success. The result was that, until about 1300, the two regions where the jealous localism of seignorial power and the independent town was most fully realized set the pace for the economic, cultural, and religious life of Western Europe and spearheaded its warlike expansion.

While two peoples led Europe's growth during the high Middle Ages, the church seemed to rule her. No longer content or able to be second after the Gregorian age, the clergy undertook to command. The church had its war, the crusade or *bellum romanum*. When combined with the ecclesiastical control of marriage and divorce, the crusade gave the popes a controlling hand in European diplomacy. The church's objective was to unify the *respublica christiana*, an ideal that had become a reality in the Gregorian age. Partly replacing the older monarchies, the church moved to regulate society and thereby to create a domestic peace in which the Christian citizen could be educated to future bliss. The military elite and soldiery were policed by the idea and the law of just war. In economic life, the practical mechanism of the just price and the condemnation of usury were employed to achieve a similar end. Furthermore, although often attacked, the same purpose was served by the "realist" position adopted by contemporary philosophers and theologians. The priest's miracle of the mass enhanced the presidency of the clerical order, and reinforced the sense of a direct link between God's eternal ordinance and the institutions of this earth. Indeed, circumstances justified clerical hope. At a time of expanding populations, newly cleared fields, new towns, and growing personal freedom, nature herself seemed beneficent. Headed by a church of divine foundation, man's institutions seemed capable of enabling him to achieve happiness.

Nor did the hierarchy and secular clergy lead these movements alone. The monastic militia was quite as active. The clearing of forest and marsh by the Cistercians and other orders is well known. The military orders provided Europe's best soldiers, and, until the rise of Lombardy's merchant-bankers in the thirteenth century, the Templars specialized in papal and state finance. New orders or foundations everywhere appeared to house the aged, the sick, the destitute, and the fallen. The growth of social service was financed by a variety of religious institutions, some, such as the indulgence, originally related to the Crusades, others to the pressures exerted on the well-to-do by the growth of the penitential system. The thirteenth century also saw the fulfillment of earlier efforts in education: the formaliza-

tion of the university system and preuniversity schooling for the laity in the larger towns.

In this time of successful leadership, ecclesiastical thinkers increasingly turned to examine the reality of this world. One aspect of this was the West's new receptiveness to Arabic or Aristotelian scientism. Another was the churchmen's heightened interest in both ideal and practical forms of ecclesiastical and secular government. Of still greater significance was a gradual change in the monastic ethos. Although spiritual withdrawal still attracted many, physical withdrawal faded before the attractions of active engagement in the world's life, in helping the sick or the poor or, as with the Mendicants, in animating the church's mission by preaching and stimulating penance at the world's crossroads.

As in most human affairs, a measure both of failure and of excess marked this effort. Of the latter, an instance was the deprecation of the soldier and businessman whose careers, according to clerical rigorists, could not be followed without sin. Bernard of Clairvaux even denied the possibility of a just war among Christians, and the oft-repeated blanket condemnation of usury attacked an essential economic function in the name of a utopian conception of brotherhood. Luckily, the effects of this rigor were tempered by circumstances. Bernard really wrote to promote the Crusade. The climax of the onslaught on usury coincided with the rapid rise of social corporations, the craft and trade guilds, in the thirteenth century. It also inadvertently encouraged the creation of new forms of partnerships and investment contracts that helped improve economic institutions and state finance. Palliation aside, however, excessive rigorism illustrates the clergy's own brand of moral tyranny, its own spiritual usury. In this period, also, the intellectuals' idea of the relationship of nature and man to God seemed to many unsatisfactory or imperfect. The attempt to use the Aristotelian system here not only contradicted several Christian doctrines but also failed to resolve basic philosophical and moral problems: freedom, determinism, individual responsibility. As a result, the relationship of clerical intellectuals to Aristotelian or other naturalist thought was always ambivalent. The probing attack on the Latin Averroists—naturalist Aristotelians named after the Muslim philosopher and commentator Averroes (1126–1198)—and even on the moderate Thomas Aquinas (1225–1274) in the 1270's is a celebrated example of this uncertainty.

In solving problems, the church was often torn by internal conflict. Although bishops and popes were generally supreme, there were other authorities and other sources of inspiration. Among the former were the *magistri*, the teachers in the schools and universities, a largely autonomous group. So sanguine was this age that the *magistri* were able to "canonize"

ancient and non-Christian philosophies on the grounds that they were bound to support the Christian vision. They also repeated Peter Abelard's (1079-1142) dubious dictum that truth is engendered by questioning and fathered by disputation. As to inspiration, a principal source was the monastic tradition. Enthusiasts of the Gregorian age had spread everywhere the monks' conception of a wholly spiritual church, whose members lived in apostolic poverty, freed from the stains of the flesh and of material possessions. Useful for the assault on the old state churches, this utopian separation of the spiritual and material had to be modified when the church had come to rule the West. But the dream haunted the Latin mind partly because such utopias are seductive and partly because they enable enthusiasts to condemn those in power for failing to attain impossible ideals. Many also condemned others because of their own frustrations and failings. Although often beloved and appealed to, for example, the only too visible papacy was a prime target for this escapism, being blamed for its exercise of practical political power and for their own failures by both local churchmen and utopian dogmatists. More extreme minds, furthermore, went beyond this to assert that any part of the church at peace with the moral equivocation or ambiguity of this world should be cut off root and branch. Theirs was a vision of heaven on earth.

Among these critics, some turned toward heresy, a term meaning not so much divergent thought as the building of secessionist sects. The ideas of these groups had been both spread and even encouraged in the battles with the old state churches during the Gregorian epoch. The repudiation of revolutionary enthusiasm by the bulk of the church, however, drove many to found their own sects, all of which shared, in greater or lesser degree, several characteristics. They were elitist, expressing this either in terms of the priesthood of all "true believers" or in the creation of a "heretical" hierarchy. They attacked the "orthodox" clergy, often relying on ancient canons invalidating the sacraments of those they considered morally vitiated. All rigoristically separated spirit and matter, although only one sect, the Cathars, partly moved by Eastern ideology, emerged as really dualist or Manichean.

These sects also flourished especially in north Italy and in south France, thence up the Rhone to the valleys of the Meuse and Rhine. Heresy, then, grew best in regions marked by rapid economic or cultural growth. Since, however, such areas were also most inventive of "orthodox" thought and institutions, particularly monastic, commercial and cultural expansion are not enough to explain the spread of heresy. As significant is another fact, namely that the regions in which political fragmentation was most apparent boasted unusually lively heretical movements. Both orthodoxy and heresy may therefore be said to have flourished least in those

areas where the older medieval unitary states, together with their state churches, were most strongly retained.

Indeed, where, as in twelfth-century England, churches were still partly state agencies, princes were quick to undertake the repression of heresy. Fearing to rely on the secular sword and vainly hoping to persuade, the church was slower to act. But repeated missionary failures eventually forced its hand. By 1209 a crusade had to be launched against the heretics in Languedoc, and in the 1230's the new papal inquisition was instituted there and in Lombardy, whence it slowly spread through much of Europe. But force was not enough; heresy or secession was really undermined by Rome's readiness to accept new religious enthusiasms. Yielding to the pleas of the secular hierarchy and the older orders, Rome had resisted the creation of new orders or devotions until about 1200. Around that time, however, the admission of the Lombard *Humiliati* and other groups signaled a change of heart that resulted in the recognition by Rome of the Franciscans (1209), the Dominicans (1215), and the other mendicant orders together with the lay devotional groups associated with these friars. These saved the day by opening the door to enthusiasm and by renewing the parish, the pulpit, education, and charity.

That there were difficulties is undoubted. Mendicant preachers were the bane of the secular clergy, and the professors of Paris fought the friars' invasion of the university's halls. More serious was the exaggeration of old monastic ideals. The Franciscan imitation of apostolic poverty both deprecated the glory of the rest of the church and, because impossible here on earth, led to shifty deception and serious conflict within the order. Furthermore, wild enthusiasm so strengthened old ideas of spiritual progress, recently expressed by Joachim of Fiore (c. 1130-1202), that some preached the imminent coming of an age of spiritualized monasticism in which the old church and its sacraments would have little or no place.

None of these were more than threats, however, until another triumph of this happy age had borne its fruit, the emergence of the lay spirit. This was a compound of two elements. the growth of literacy among laymen and the emergence of a lay ideology. The beginnings of the first coincided with the Gregorian troubles when many clergy were expelled from the church by the radical "reformers." Before that time, apart from the Jews, some Italians, and a very few others, literacy and hence most technical knowledge had been limited to churchmen. Afterward, things changed, partly because a mature society requires greater specialization of function and partly because of the trouble within the clerical order itself. At first in Italy, the secular professions of medicine and law, together with their schools, such as Salerno and Bologna, appeared. Similarly, with the French leading the way, a secular literature emerged that both echoed and

caricatured its churchly antecedents. Around 1300, however, the triumph of the lay spirit was as yet incomplete. In much of Europe, the clergy still controlled education and offered scribal service, and local or national churches still either provided the reward or served as a recruiting ground for officers of state. Only Italy and adjacent areas or occasional towns elsewhere seem almost modern with their partly lay schools and their secular professions, political, legal, medical, and artistic. But the basic step toward creating literate lay professions had been taken. Busy seeking their freedom, however, the clergy did not at first feel the loss of their power. After all, the duties from which they withdrew were those that placed them under secular authority in case of fault or failure. The creation of lay literacy was therefore as much the work of the clergy as of the laity. Their withdrawal provided the need, and they were themselves the first teachers and perhaps the first recruits for the new lay professions.

To literacy must be added the lay spirit—the emulation and rivalry of the clergy by the laity. This spirit had never been absent in the West, but it had usually been expressed in terms of the conflict of the church (*sacerdotium*) and the state (*imperium*) or the old competition between the nonliterate order of the *bellatores* and the literate one of the *oratores*, a combat always limited by the fact that neither could do without the other. With the victories of the church in the Gregorian age and the resulting sharper separation of the clergy from the laity (“the two peoples,” as the jurists called them), the issue became more broadly social. The appearance of professional jurists, for example, not only eliminated the clergy’s monopoly of literacy, but also weakened their claim to be the sole judges of moral life here on earth. Jurists loved to repeat those Roman texts that likened judges to priests. Admittedly, the legal profession did not always reinforce lay solidarity. Its members endlessly rehearsed the ancient argument that the robe was as necessary for the republic as the sword, if not more so. A combat between ordinary citizens and professionals over who was to administer justice, promulgate law, and elect judges gradually spread from Italy through the West. On the other hand, legal professionalism weakened ecclesiastical solidarity as well. If canon lawyers argued that just judges were of greater value to the church than the secluded religious, intellectuals and monks complained from the twelfth century that the church was no longer governed by its ancient canons but instead by Justinian’s worldly code.

The lay spirit was expressed in ways largely borrowed from the ecclesiastical order or transmitted by it. The clerks’ pejorative view of laymen, for example, was soon imitated by jurists. Churchmen believed that the source of true nobility was not blood or family tradition, but virtue, a notion naturally dear to careerists. This idea was quickly seized upon by

jurists, and their emphasis upon an individual's attainments as against lineage (an idea only dumbly shared by the sword's servitors) permeated the literate professions. All the same, much of the lay spirit seemed opposed to that of the church. Although essentially religious, for example, the lay idea of romantic love was decidedly earth-centered. Against the clerk's salvation stood the layman's earthly fame. The revival of these great themes certainly reflects the turn toward the world that was reversing the spiritual withdrawal of late antiquity on which the church had been built. In spite of this, it is also clear that some of these ideas moved clerks as well as laymen. Since the clergy sought to remake the world into a school for pilgrims on their way toward heaven, earthly glory could without blasphemy be paralleled to sanctity. That there was conflict between clergy and laity here is evident, however, especially when the spread of the monastic ethos is examined. As the growth of monastic orders under the Gregorians and the later movement of the mendicant orders of the thirteenth century show, the penetration of the church by a revived sense of the monk's spiritual vocation had again and again revitalized the priesthood. At the same time, however, the penetration of the layman's world by this same strong sense of vocation had reinforced an old belief that if, while dutifully performing his earthly calling, a layman withdrew in spirit from terrestrial corruptions, he could pronounce upon religion quite as competently as a priest or a monk. Empowered by literacy, this conviction constituted the cutting edge of laicism.

The state is the natural repository of the lay spirit, but it was typical of the high middle ages that this entity was not as majestic as in antiquity or modern times. Other than the relatively decentralized economy of the time, a reason for this was the triumph of the church in the Gregorian age. Men felt themselves to be citizens not merely of a nation, but also of a *respublica christiana* equipped with its peace, the *pax dei*, and its war, the crusade or *bellum romanum*. Nevertheless, the secular state was still to be reckoned with. Large towns and even rural seigniorics created tight little communities that soon revived the ancient notion of citizenship in a *patria*. Nor had the old nations ever entirely disappeared. Although sometimes transmuted into mere racial or regional pride, folk traditions often served to cement national or quasi-national institutions, especially on the frontiers of Latin Europe, as in Spain, England, and Hungary. Lastly, the growth and consequent recentralization of the economy naturally fostered political centralization.

This helps explain a basic reversal in the evolution of the Western state. In the past, political power had devolved upon ever lesser figures, from emperors, as it were, to simple seigniors, a process accompanied by geographical decentralization or political separatism. In some measure, the passage downward of political power continued until into the fourteenth

century, as is shown by the movement toward democracy in the Italian urban republics and the growth of aristocratic limitations upon the freedom of Europe's monarchs. On the other hand, political recentralization was everywhere apparent as early as the twelfth century, expressing itself in such varied ways as Milan's conquest of much of Lombardy and the attempt of England's aristocracy to run the central government for its own benefit, rather than to dismember it.

In this circumstance, although deprived of independent moral sanction by the church, the idea of the state began to grow again. To the men of the time, the republic became a fictional but eternal body whose changing needs often required new taxes and laws. Obviously, political decentralization gave more weight to local law or custom than it has today. In divided Italy, for example, town statutes took precedence over the *ius commune* of the Roman law taught in the schools. Yet, this medieval adaptation of ancient law spread, not because it was linked to any state, but because its exponents derived from it legal norms that served to link together independent political entities by providing common models. As the study of law grew, so also did the study of politics. Past tradition, although rich in ideas of elective monarchy, conciliar participation in government, concepts of political contract, and hatred of tyranny, had mainly dealt with one form of organization, monarchy, and had centered on the relationship of princes to the church. The increased complexity of both civil and ecclesiastical society now produced true political philosophy, a somewhat autonomous science derived from Islam and the ancients. By 1300, thinkers were avidly debating the merits of government by a prince as against that of the aristocratic few or the popular many, investigating the implanting in particular regions of these various forms in divine and profane history, and even trying to tie their use to national character or to geographical or astral factors.

The idea of the state was most developed in Italy, partly because, in and after the Gregorian age, the erosion of the empire's power combined with rapid urban growth to create really independent republics. To the jurists of Italy, the witching hour was the Peace of Constance in 1183 when Lombard cities ceased recognizing any "superiors on earth." At about the same time, these cities also began to elect their *potestates* or heads of state. Of course, Italy was not unique. The republican form, men thought, was suited to the city, whereas a village was too small for independence, and a kingdom was too large for the easy accommodation of regional differences. Towns everywhere won some autonomy, especially those lying along the frontiers of princely states, as in the Low Countries, Rhenish and south Germany, and the French Midi. Actually, urban independence endured for long only in Italy and a few adjacent regions, a fact

that created a distinction between northern and southern urbanism. In the north, town freedom was usually limited by princely authority. Hence, as they grew, northern towns often split, part of the area or administration falling to the commune and part being retained by the lord. Such splitting was further echoed in the relationship of town to countryside. Although northern towns always expanded their jurisdictions beyond their gates, only southern cities subdued whole provinces. When that happened, indigenous aristocracies either fell into clientage or found profit in leaving princely service to lead an urban republic. Thus southern gentlefolk became increasingly urban while the reverse obtained in the north. There, where princes still could divide in order to rule, the never easy relation between burgher and rural gentleman was consciously and intentionally exacerbated.

The republican form suited the town, but what groups controlled the republic was the touchy question. In the tenth and eleventh centuries, when towns began their rise, they usually contained elements ranging from the martial aristocracy to simple artisans and peasants. Thereafter, the need for community solidarity when fighting a prince or lord normally stimulated ideas of common citizenship and equality before the law. Besides, liberty often meant revolt, an effervescence that accelerated the ascent of lower social groups. In general, however, the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries saw most towns led to victory by relatively aristocratic elements. Where princely power was weak and urban growth rapid, the old martial and administrative cadres mixed with rising business elites to provide leadership in the republic and fostered and profited from its economic enterprises. Where princely power was strong or urban growth slow, however, the martial cadre tended to split, part becoming the new and somewhat rural nobility of the prince and part assimilating to the burghers, or, as they were often termed, the merchants. Nevertheless, even where this latter pattern held sway, a patrician group inevitably appeared in the course of time, one imitating the manners and lineages of the gentlefolk. Here again the distinction between urban society in northern and southern Europe can be stated only in relative terms. Evidence of family pride, towers often graced patrician town houses, but they were less numerous and humbler in the north than in the "skyscraper" cities of Italy.

Aristocratic dominance was rarely complete. Although rebellion often forced their unwilling hands, ruling groups were usually open to new wealth. First in Italy but also soon beyond the Alps, increased social maturity required training in government, law, and the arts. Patricians resisted this trend, partly because paid service let lesser folk hold office and partly because it meant higher taxes, thus exciting rate payers against oligarchies. Being used to paid service in seignorial or princely retinues, however, gentlemen speedily entered the other professions, legal and liter-

ate In Italy at least, salaried political command (the office of the *potestas*) automatically went to those with experience of war. Well before 1300, therefore, the old nonliterate tradition of the martial aristocracy had been weakened by the conviction that, to be a gentleman, one had to be competent in both arms and letters. Still, there was social tension here. Lawyers, we have seen, claimed to be more useful to the republic than soldiers, thus gilding their doctor's tassels with more carats than they allowed the knight's spurs or belts. Lineage accents blood right, but expertise makes career the path to nobility.

Far more important a threat to aristocratic government, however, was the rise of "the many" to participation in politics in the thirteenth century, an ascent made possible by the guilds, organizations modeled either on earlier spontaneous associations, such as early town communes and merchant guilds, or on old state-regulated colleges providing community services. The first great surge of guild corporatism waited until shortly before 1200, when increased economic specialization forced small businessmen and artisans to combine against those who controlled their raw materials and sales. Because law regulated economy, in later years the guilds pushed slowly into government. Naturally, their success varied. Where princes were strong, guilds were encouraged in order to check patrician exponents of town independence. In such cases, while corporatism made progress, freedom declined. Where towns were free, however, the growth of guilds was initially slower, but long before 1300 it was clear that they would win out, and that the simple people would have a greater share of community wealth and political power than in the past. At the same time, larger entrepreneurs reacted by building or reinforcing their associations, merchant, banking, or industrial. In Italy, the professions of law and medicine organized to raise standards and hoist fees. As a result, guild equalitarianism never really triumphed; indeed, it helped to rend the social fabric of the community. Law and literature came to distinguish the bourgeois from those who worked with their hands. Where gentlefolk lived in town, as in Italy, vehement, if unsuccessful, attempts were made to expel them from business and government. Unhappy prophecy of future social war though this was, the relative success of the democratic urge of corporatism indicates that it completed the process of the passing down or devolution of political power started so many centuries before.

Small towns and villages evolved in a manner similar to great cities. They often leagued together to attain or defend their freedom. Much as in town, immigrant villagers were protected from seizure by their old lords. Countryfolk issued constitutions and law codes, sometimes using standard models, such as those of Lorrain in France or Flemish law in north Germany, and sometimes adapting the customs of a nearby city. A measure of

judicial or executive power often fell to villagers, who entrusted it to elected officers, consuls in the south and *jurati* or mayors in the north. The complex differentiations of city society spread to the country. By 1300, the difference between rural bourgeois and peasant was apparent in the French Midi. In general, then, the distinction between the great and the small medieval nucleus was one of degree. The village attained less independence and less self-government than did the town. Contemporary political thinkers explained this by asserting that a village was too small for freedom because it could not provide itself with sufficient specialized services for a good or rounded life. It needed specialists to represent it in foreign courts, to direct defense and bring outside aid, military, and economic. By its clientage, therefore, the village paid lordly houses, ecclesiastical institutions, or nearby cities for this special personnel. In consequence, although many elements of self-government were embedded in it, the basic form of village government was the petty monarchy of the seignior.

The church was Europe's greatest government. Although the papacy directly ruled only the small principality around Rome and, from time to time, had a vague suzerainty recognized by secular powers like England, Sicily, or the Holy Land, its ecumenical authority and Europe's power structure described above enabled the church to wield more political power than any other Western government. Like Europe's other large "states," its constitution was monarchical. Free of imperial might from the latter eleventh century, the church's prince was chosen by the cardinals, Rome's local clergy, themselves appointed by the reigning pope. Although the pope legislated only in council, his grants or privileges and his rights to install or appoint bishops and other clergy and to tax churches and monasteries were ample indeed by the 1250's. Equally significant were his and his court's judicial decisions that created legal and constitutional precedents to regulate the "moral" jurisdiction of the clergy over the laity and to settle disputes within the church.

Not that the church was wholly monarchical. The regular clergy even moved toward democracy. Improving on Cluny, Cistercian houses elected their abbots, who, in turn, assembled in all-powerful annual conclaves, a system extended by papal order to the Benedictines in 1215. Most democratic were the Dominican friars, all of whose officers, save the general, were elected for brief terms. Equally consequential was the ancient conciliar idea. An aspect of this was the cardinals' assertion of their right to be consulted by the pope in grave matters. Starting in 1122 and culminating in 1215, general papal councils served as the church's principal legislative body, and their success, together with the Hohenstaufen crisis, inspired a stronger conciliar movement from 1245 to 1312. General councils then

met about once every twenty years, and by the end of that time, raucous voices were heard advancing conciliar to the detriment of papal authority and demanding regular meetings. When papal encouragement of provincial councils and the jurists' emphasis upon a college's rights as against its head are added, it is evident that although monarchy ruled the church, by 1300 it was limited, even threatened, by a lively conciliar impulse.

Between the ecumenical church and the rural seigniories and towns were Europe's secular monarchies and principalities. The older medieval type of state still flourished into the eleventh century. Canute's Anglo-Scandinavian thalassocracy, Castile's revived Hispanic empire, and the German empire with its dependent church and ministerial service cadre illustrate the continuity of these older, quasi-Carolingian forms. During and after the Gregorian age, however, these states declined, as the local clergy and aristocracies were gradually freed from princely control. To this basic cause may be added the rise of Italy and France. Italian towns helped break imperial power south of the Alps, and emigrants from France aided clerical "reform" in weakening the unity of Spain's Castilian Empire. From the mid-eleventh century, a hundred years of successive waves of French settlement submerged the Anglo-Saxons, and the restive independence of the French seigniors threatened England's ancient unity. In short, although many elements of the older state were everywhere retained, especially in frontier areas like Spain, England, Scandinavia, and Hungary, old governments everywhere suffered partial disintegration in the Gregorian age and after.

Curiously, the same period also witnessed the slow reversal of political decentralization and the laying of new foundations on which to build future regional or national states. Although prompted by many things, such as Hispanic and English resistance to France's military or cultural pressure, the renewed centralization everywhere paralleled the contemporary expansion of the economy and the concomitant growth of towns and commerce. In some regions, of course, circumstances prevented the building of centralized states. The Hohenstaufen attempt to revitalize the empire during the thirteenth century by shifting the base of their power to southern Italy failed before the opposition of the popes, the Lombard cities, and the French invasion of Italy. After the death of the greatest of the Hohenstaufens, Frederick II, in 1250, the historian of the state should turn his attention from the institutions of the empire itself to those of its successors, the Italian republics and German regional principalities. Other regions were more advantaged. In England, from the mid-twelfth century, the institutions of an original national unity were updated by the French dynasty of the Angevins using Continental models, especially Italian Roman law, to mold the most unified of Europe's prenational states. Even in France, the

very model of "feudal" decentralization, steps toward unification were taken in the thirteenth century when her once puny monarchy absorbed all the greater feudatories save Guienne and Brittany.

Because governments needed to mobilize their citizens, centralization was accompanied by a rise of regional or national parliaments and courts. Frequent rebellions show, however, than an equally impelling motive was the desire of communities and seigniors to control princely authority. Rebels often found external allies. German emperors undercut their restive princelings by demanding that the notables in each particular local area be consulted about important matters. The popes also usually asserted that such consultation was a prince's duty lest he be condemned as a tyrant. As a result, the aristocracies of small districts and those with strong unitarian traditions no longer attempted to decentralize state power but instead to control or restrain the central government itself. Exemplified in England, Aquileia, Aragon's Sicily, parts of Spain and Hungary, this pattern was not to be found everywhere. In France, a much larger country, regionalism resulted in much provincial autonomy and in somewhat decentralized royal courts and assemblies. Still, by around 1300, these centralist agencies were appearing nearly everywhere. What was new about them was not theory. Princes of the past had usually issued law and levied war and taxes with the consent of notables, but these new assemblies were larger, their meetings more regular, and their representation of regions and social orders more formal. Unlike those of contemporary city republics, however, these assemblages rarely seized legislative initiative from their princes, and scarcely distinguished between their judicial and legislative functions.

As these new foci of men's loyalty emerged around 1300, the appeal of Rome began to wane. This could not have been foreseen by contemporaries. Rome had led the West to great success, her alliance with Italy and France had placed her on the side of the most powerful forces in Latin culture, and Europe's border powers had needed papal aid. Rome had financed and directed the Crusades and supported the crusader-states spread from Jerusalem to Byzantium in the Near East. From England to Sicily and from Hungary to Portugal, frontier states had called upon the popes either to diminish pressures from within Europe or to support their own outward expansions. The Iberian Muslims were defeated by holy wars, but Portugal and Aragon emerged from under Castilian hegemony as papal fiefs. Rome gave Ireland to England in the twelfth century, but aided England against the French Capetians in the early thirteenth. Throughout the thirteenth century, from Innocent III to Boniface VIII, the pope was Europe's arbiter, his city her real capital. In 1268 the execution of Conradin, the last scion of the Hohenstaufen line, seemed to confirm the

victory of the *sacerdotium* over the *imperium*, of the Roman church over secular power.

This victory, however, was bought too dearly. In the latter stages of the conflict between empire and papacy, the popes isolated the emperors from other secular princes by stating that each king was emperor in his own realm. Finally, in the decisive moments of the mid-thirteenth century when her alliance with Lombardy's cities and dissident German princelings was not enough to defeat the Sicilian Hohenstaufen, Rome called upon France for help. Although they were successful against the Hohenstaufen, the dangers of this alignment became clear the moment the French had established themselves in Provence and Italy. It not merely reinforced the French belief that France was another Holy Land, the peculiar agent of providence, but the French party in the Roman curia also grew in might. Rome's inability to disentangle itself from French power was a major reason for the defeat of Boniface VIII at the hands of Philip IV of France, a defeat aptly symbolized by the momentary seizure of that pontiff by French allies at Anagni in 1303. Similarly, the conflict between the Germans under the emperor Louis of Bavaria and Pope John XXII (1316-1334) resulted from the removal of the papal seat to Avignon in 1309 and its subservience to French interests.

In the earlier battle, Boniface had summoned a council to excoriate royal tyranny, and Philip had proposed a similar assembly to judge the pope's heresy. This was no mere repetition of Gregorian patterns. What gave it force was the new lay spirit embodied in the nation or state. A miniature Jerusalem to its citizens, an Italian republic taxed its clergy and demanded their loyalty. French kings thought to revive the Crusade by "reforming" the church and unifying Europe under their aegis. Whole social orders shared these princely convictions. Mimicking Hohenstaufen propaganda, French gentlefolk called themselves sons of Charlemagne, whose sword had "won the world" for Christ, and pledged themselves to restore the church to pristine purity by stripping her of wealth and worldly cares. Nor was the church able to repulse these aggressions, at once both lay and utopian. She was herself a house divided. Her own utopian dream of freedom from worldly concerns exploded ruinously in the civil war between the rigorist and laxist parties within the Franciscan order. To defeat the Hohenstaufen, also, Rome had called upon the local churches whose prelates met in councils from 1245 on. Not unpredictably, the hostility of the bishops to Rome's privileged Mendicants led to the repression of new religious orders and devotions by 1311, thereby stalling hopes of Christian progress. The Franciscans of all shades then seceded temporarily from Rome to side with Louis of Bavaria. At the same time, the local churches resisted papal centralism and generated a conciliar idea that threatened

Rome's monarchy Still immature, however, lay power did not yet win the victory. That was still two centuries or more in the future. It is nonetheless apparent that the new states, national or regional, were beginning to replace the ecumenical church and the particularistic rural seigniorship and town as the focus of Western man's loyalty.

Further reading suggestions follow chapter 34.

34 The Late Middle Ages

These great struggles between church and state occurred during the apogee of the Middle Ages, a time when it still seemed possible that all dreams, however contradictory, might come true, but also a time in which the constituents of the crisis that erupted around 1350 were already discernible. One element was the increased resistance to Latin expansion. Islam's early counterattack has already been mentioned, as has its disruption by the Mongol assault. A second wave began in the late thirteenth century. The Muslims repulsed Latin raids on North Africa and continued to hold Granada until 1492, by which time Ottoman power had slowly spread from Anatolia to the Danube. Even shattered Byzantium long preserved a tenuous independence between the Latin and Islamic blocs. Obviously, the men of 1300 could not predict these events and continued to whistle in the dark. Some placed their hope of resuming the Crusades by building utopian plans for Latin unity. Others condemned war and vaunted missions instead. By the mid-fourteenth century, however, even the once lively missionary movement was everywhere failing. By 1300, moreover, Latin aggression had turned upon itself. On a scale unequaled since Gregorian days, the holy war or crusade had come to be employed in European internal conflicts, especially in the wars against the Hohenstaufen. Europe's central regions, France and Italy, quailed before the rise of peripheral powers. The English invasion and defeat of France in the fourteenth century and the halting of England's conquest of Ireland and Scotland illustrate this volte-face. Only in Germany did the older pattern of outward expansion still obtain for a time, although there too the later 1300's saw the first serious counterattacks by Nordic and Slavic peoples.

Of equal consequence was the sharpening of social tensions within Europe. The rise of the *respublica christiana* in the Gregorian or Crusade age, for example, had decisively weakened the Roman idea of secular

Princes and Dynasties

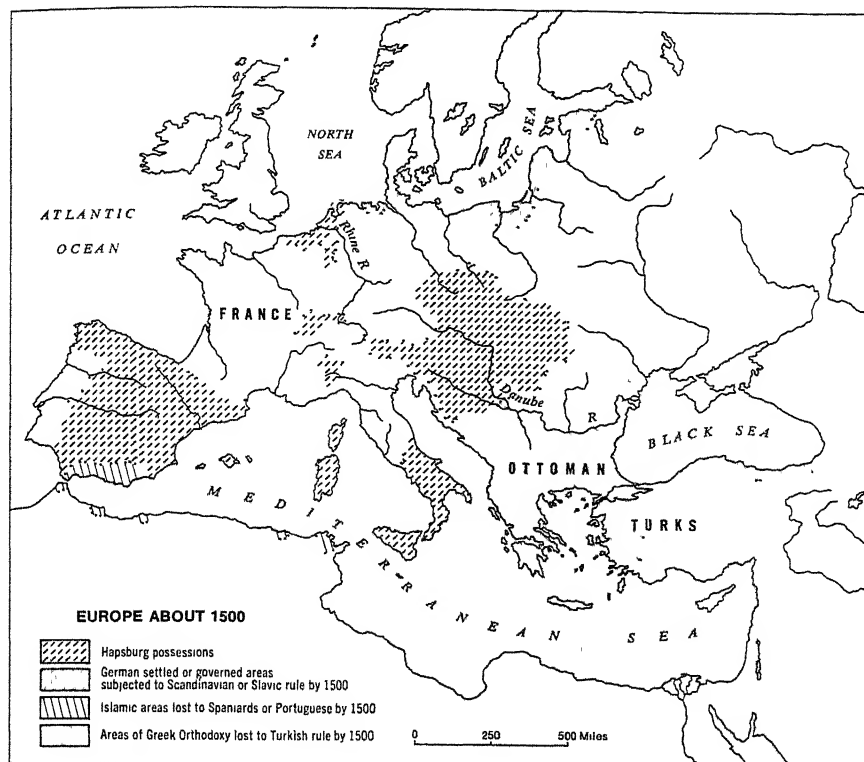
- A.D. 1273/1314/1438 ff. Hapsburg emperors
 1328 French Capetians replaced by Valois
 1485 English Angevins replaced by Tudors

Soldiers, Magistrates, Artists, and Businessmen

- c. 1267–1337 Giotto, son of Bondone, of Florence
 1313–1354 Cola, son of Rienzi
 1394 Death of John Hawkwood
 c. 1395–1456 Jacques Coeur
 c. 1394–1476 John Fortescue

Intellectuals

- 1221–1274 Bonaventure
 1282 Death of Siger of Brabant
 c. 1214–1292 Roger Bacon
 1274–1308 John Duns Scotus
 c. 1250–1312 Peter Dubois
 c. 1240–1313 Arnold of Villanova
 c. 1235–1315 Raymond Lull
 1265–1321 Dante Alighieri
 1328 Death of John of Jandun
 c. 1275–1342 Marsiglio of Padua
 c. 1300–1349 William of Ockham
 1304–1374 Francis Petrarch
 c. 1329–1384 John Wycliffe
 c. 1369–1415 John Hus
 1483–1546 Martin Luther



citizenship. By 1215, the church had introduced legislation severely restricting Jews and Muslims in Christendom. But law was only part of the picture. Another part derived from the devolution of political and social power. Anti-Jewish outbreaks often accompanied the attempts around 1100 of urban mercantile and ministerial groups to break the power of their princes. Two hundred years later, the rising of the plebs against the ruling aristocracies of Western towns and villages evoked more profound waves of anti-Jewish and, in Spain, of anti-Muslim fervor. The growth of central government also played a part. England's precocity in inventing anti-Jewish propaganda paralleled the rapid growth of the Crown, its initial incapacity to tax the aristocracy, and the consequent squeezing of its Jews. Increasingly hated and impoverished, England's Jews were expelled in 1295. Everywhere in the later Middle Ages, the Jews were reduced to marginal economic functions, pushed back toward Islam's frontiers, or forced to flee toward Europe's eastern reaches, there to play for a time their past role as merchants and favored capitalizers. That these attacks were as much social

as ideological is clearly shown by the failure of Latin missions. By 1300 in both Italy and Spain, the appearance of the category of the "new" or "quasi"-Christian suggests that Latin society could find little place even for the Jew or Muslim who had converted.

Similar social divisions developed among Christians. The growth of personal liberty during the high Middle Ages had paradoxical results. The freeing of ministerial elites from their princes left those remaining behind, as the once-favored Jews, in "cameral servitude." In the countryside, not all villagers attained the same measure of freedom. By 1300, these disparities invited classification, an effort that led to the defining of old duties as new servitudes. Being sometimes a method of pressuring farmers to surrender land in exchange for liberty, however, this did not always spread serfdom. Only when or where labor was in short supply, as during the plagues or in eastern Germany in the fifteenth century, were farmers again bound to the land. These pressures naturally led to rural social conflicts that, beginning in France as early as the 1280's, gradually became nearly endemic. The urban parallel was more political. Guilds or corporations had attained political power, and as we have seen, this democratization was accompanied by a growing social rigidity, separating nobles or patricians from the commoners, the bourgeois from the hand worker. In Italy, republican government soon reached stagnation as those still excluded from real power were reduced to a minority. Naturally, given the Italians' past experience of ever broader political participation, the excluded did not easily resign their hopes. The result was that revolts such as that of Florence's Ciompi in 1378 punctuated late medieval town life, and elections became mere preludes to revolutionary upheavals.

This social conflict was part of a general malady whose grander manifestations were a general decline of population in most regions, repetitive waves of sickness, and a faltering of economic growth. Nature has been blamed for these cataclysms. That the weather worsened is possible. Certainly, also, sickness was everywhere, although demographic decline seems to have started before the plague of 1347. But the crisis was probably precipitated by overpopulation that, after 1300, had weakened Western living standards by forcing farmers almost everywhere to cultivate marginal soils. Yet this does not explain why men were not able to use available resources more inventively. With few exceptions, the inventions men of this age were able to make were principally social, and hence could not increase the quantity of production so much as they could speed distribution and concentrate means for producing export commodities. These inventions required heavy investment and intense mobilization of labor and resources, and there is no doubt that, in view of these needs, Europe's institutional structure around 1300 left much to be desired. The investment in the

church, charitable services, and education was heavy, perhaps excessive. In the towns, guild corporatism maximized profits and multiplied monopolistic restrictions. In the countryside, the subdivision of inheritances emphasized maintaining status rather than capitalizing production. Commerce was similarly inhibited by the persistence of provincial, seignorial, or urban autonomy and particularism.

During the harsh fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, Europe pulled itself together. Nature helped as plagues pruned man's excessive numbers. Man helped too, and his inventions show where he was going. Four-wheeled wagons and square-rigged ships both moved and supplied ever larger concentrations of mankind. The cost of cannon and of the fortifications to withstand them outran the finances and defenses of the independent town and seignory. Printing gave teaching or command a uniformity essential for summoning unheard-of numbers for peace or war.

More consequential than these largely fifteenth-century inventions were the earlier institutional innovations that made their reception possible. All weakened past particularisms—urban, seignorial, or provincial. Everywhere, even in divided Italy and Germany, the unit of political concentration became larger. Along with grander size came a more intense economic mobilization. Already dimly outlined in Italy before 1300, the whole panoply of state-regulated banking and monetary policy, bullion-measured trade balances, and state-chartered companies slowly spread to the rest of Europe. Paralleling the multiplication of social orders, the economy was increasingly brigaded into guilds, naturally hostile to change, but forced by state-owned enterprise and by the prince to admit innovation. Because corporate interests often conflicted and because the guilds never organized the whole of industry or trade, other groups had roles to play in the interstices of the economy. Among these were Jews and Lombards resident in foreign lands who were privileged to lend money at usury. More prestigious were the princes' favorite financial wizards such as Jacques Coeur (c. 1395–1456), part entrepreneur, part state officer, part black marketeer. Highest of all was the prince himself, who, when these others had evoked enough popular hatred, emptied their gold-laden purses into his treasury.

The prince was the chief symbol or agent of human mobilization. Medieval political theory had rightly argued that because it transcended particular parties, the institution of monarchy was suited for large areas with diverse and conflicting regional interests; within society, also, the prince was called to play a similar part. Himself a member of no one social order, he policed to his own profit the endemic conflicts of late-medieval social groups. In towns, for example, the poor fought against the

medieval equivalent of sales taxes while the rich battled graduated real property or income taxes. When a prince was invited to intervene to pacify strife, he usually collected both taxes. Because war is often an external projection of inner social conflict or, as in France during the Hundred Years' War, a desperate invitation to foreigners to settle insoluble civil wars, the prince found his natural empire in warfare and foreign affairs. His regime also policed the intense pugnacity of the age by repressing the militias, both aristocratic and plebeian, with their self-defeating local and class conflicts. He domesticated the armed hosts of men deracinated by civil war and economic woe. Permanent military units, regularity of payment, and career predictability had their start in Italy's condottieri and France's royal companies of the early fifteenth century. In the meantime, each social group or region produced a new military arm to express its combativeness. The gentry and yeomanry created cavalry, the towns, artillery; while from hill and mountain came a real infantry, an arm capable of attacking in the open field. As in economic life, this brigading produced its heroes, the great captains, deputies of their princes and forerunners of the generals who replaced the plainsong of medieval war with the differing rhythms of different arms in the polyphony of the modern battlefield.

How to endow a prince with the requisite powers was the political conundrum of late-medieval man. In much of Europe, as in France or England, where religious and social protections and powers had long been attached to kings and their houses, the matter seemed simple. There traditions merely had to be amplified to produce the divine-right monarch of modern times. Elsewhere, however, majesty had to be created. In Germany, power had fallen to local princes in the fourteenth century, but sovereignty itself for long remained associated with the emperor alone. Furthermore, Turkish and French pressures forced the building of eastern and western marches, a veritable carapace for Germany, that led to a Hapsburg imperial revival. By the eve of the Reformation, German local princes were obliged to seek a new solvent of empire and thus assert their sovereign powers.

Progress was also slow in Italy. Although foreign influence was important there, the basic step was to conjure forth the prince and his authority from republican institutions. To expand the limited jurisdictions and tenures of short-term offices into grants of unrestricted free will (*liberum arbitrium*) in perpetuity took time. In fact, few principates grew out of those offices, such as that of the *potestas*, that had arisen when towns were winning freedom from the empire. Such offices had been fettered by aristocratic fear of tyranny or monarchy. Most principates instead derived from the police and tribunician power of later democratic offices, such as the people's captaincy. Appropriately enough, just as she had earlier led

the way to republicanism, Milan showed others the way to the principate. In spite of success, however, the victory of the princes was never complete. From Holland to Italy, republics survived in the interstices between the expanding regional states and nations. True, most were no longer popular governments, but aristocratic. The great republic of Venice had come to symbolize patrician stability in the eyes of Europe's aristocracy by the early fifteenth century.

Nor did the princes triumph totally within their states. To perform their centralizing functions, they needed general assemblies and new courts, institutions that also voiced the reluctance of local interests and aristocracies to bow to princely authority. Royal judicial and administrative offices often fell to gentlefolk or wealthy bourgeois. Rural aristocracies and urban oligarchies everywhere sought to retain the independence of their urban or seignorial jurisdictions, and to maintain their own armed retinues or troops. Admittedly, aggressive localism sometimes served to advance later centralization. In France, the Burgundian and other appanages as well as the stubborn independence of such areas as Foix and Brittany mobilized local society in new ways, creating professional armies, central courts, and even new assemblies or parliaments, thus constituting cohesive blocks for the eventual building of the French nation. But in the later Middle Ages the role of these provinces or groups of provinces and their heads—the dukes of Burgundy, Brittany, and others—was initially divisive and had much to do with the interminable civil strife that rent France during the Hundred Years' War (1338–1453). It is also likely that the shattering of the precocious or somewhat premature unity that had been built in France during the thirteenth century had its origins in the aristocratic and provincial reaction against the centralizing monarchy around 1328, when the Capetians were replaced by the Valois.

The type of resistance and its success varied, and the contrast between England and France, the two powers nearest modern nationhood, shows the dimension of this difference. Inhabiting a smaller area, traditionally more centralized and less beset by foreign invasions, England's aristocracy did better than its French counterpart. Although by the accession of the Tudors in 1485 a powerful monarchy had been established, England had deposed and slain two kings in the late Middle Ages, and came into modern times with a parliament able to limit the crown's fiscal prerogatives, and a judicature ostensibly enforcing the Crown's common law, but really speaking the piece of the aristocracy from which it was recruited. This was partially true in France, but there restraints upon the royal prerogative were local, expressed in the rights of provincial assemblies and courts. Again, in spite of the prince's effort to push a *ius commune* based on Roman antecedents, the basic law was still the regional or provincial

customs. On the other hand, frequent invasions imposed on France a need for a standing army and thus enabled her kings to reduce the national estates or assemblies to powerlessness. Although the French legal profession was learned and mighty, the judges of the royal courts or *parlements* rarely dared to refuse a royal ordinance, the normative legislation of the land. Curiously, in spite of their impotence, the French estates' conception of conciliar and electoral government and the French judges' theory of natural rights were more developed than they were on the other side of the Channel. Not as busy as were the English with the exercise of real power, French gentlemen and jurists apparently had more time to ruminate about what they lacked.

Whatever form it took, resistance was everywhere aristocratic, and it is therefore necessary to turn back to trace the history of those of gentle birth. Except for the clergy, those holding governmental and military office or possessing substantial wealth were the first elements to become free, that is, to possess property by hereditary right, to marry freely, and to limit service owed. Even before 1300, however, liberty was not enough. A burgher patriciate ruled the great towns, equaling rural gentlemen in wealth and leisure. More disheartening was the fact that a real measure of freedom had been gained by all townsmen and also by substantial numbers of country-folk. In this circumstance, what was needed was not liberty, but instead privilege. With the emergence of this conception, the basic social tone of the nobility and bourgeois notables of early modern Europe was already being limned. Nobility meant privileged exemption from taxes and other ignoble service. The bourgeois was one whose nails were not blue with labor's stains. Rural gentlefolk and town patricians, all—to use the phrase of the time—"lived nobly."

To live nobly was not always to live happily. The frictions and agonies of the late Middle Ages afflicted the rich as much as the poor. Gentle lineages were everywhere destroyed. Town patriciates were attacked by the plebs. Outrun by the princely state, aristocratic martial power was severely weakened. By 1500, only the Venetian urban oligarchy could maintain an artillery equal to that of a major prince. Given the state's capacity to mobilize large numbers of soldiers, gentlefolk were no longer numerous enough to constitute a force that could really dominate the field of battle.

A second threat came from the prince. Princes had always elevated their servants into knighthood, thus building new service cadres. Beginning late in the twelfth century, the new centralizing states slowly monopolized the right to grant knighthood and were consequently tempted to view nobility simply as a revocable reward for "virtue," that is, for service. But princes did not have it all their own way. Their need to make their rewards attractive combined with aristocratic ideas defending the hereditary trans-

mission of wealth, of position, and of government office to impede the rational conception of service. As early as the late twelfth century, even modest gentlemen insisted that, dubbed or not, the sons and grandsons of knights were as noble as their progenitors. The function of knighthood was therefore giving way to nobility's function-free privilege. In the later Middle Ages, men of high bourgeois and gentle birth successfully held more than their share of education in the liberal arts and of the cadetships that led to high civil and military office. If gentlemen no longer ruled the battlefield as knights, they made sure that they commanded most of the troops deployed upon it. This faculty of the aristocracy, bourgeois and gentlefolk alike, explains why the republican or conciliar tradition of medieval town government had come by 1500 to have little appeal for the humble people, whose livelier sons bought their way up in society by means of service to a prince. At the same time, it also tells us why the privileged orders of the early modern Western state became the repository of that tradition. It is not surprising, then, that in modern times, the stronger the aristocracy, the sooner the fall of the monarchy.

As centralizing states and nations arose, the ecumenical church began to sink. As late as about 1350, this prospect could scarcely have been imagined. When Louis of Bavaria died in 1347, the threatened secession of the Franciscans collapsed, and the conciliar idea that had flourished around 1300 seemed dormant. At no time was papal taxation and the right to appoint to benefices so developed as under the popes at Avignon, and churches such as that of divided Germany were subject to much papal interference. The papal victory, however, was more apparent than real. In spite of nagging, the Crusades—save in Prussia—had petered out. The Templars were abolished in 1312, the first monastic order to succumb to lay attack. Resurgent Islam repulsed the missionaries. Aided by the Inquisitor's ubiquitous eye, the bishops assembled in Vienne in 1312 had stifled the creation of new popular devotions and dampened the hope of spiritual progress within the Latin communion. Unable to expand, the regular clergy, as the cathedral chapters before them, were captured by the scions of burgher and noble elites. Hospitals and other charitable agencies suffered the same fate. If, except during the plagues and wars, the secular clergy were better trained and better behaved than before, they and their bishops more and more came under state control. In France, Italy, England, and Aragon, republics and princes limited papal rights of appointment, claiming to discover special virtues in their native sons. However quietly, the secular states were winning the battle, and the purses of their citizens showed where their hearts had gone. State budgets increased far more rapidly than Rome's in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.

In 1378, matters came to a head in the Great Schism. The conflict between the Avignonese and Roman papal lines reflected the divided regional and national interests of Latin society. The split obliged the rival popes to have recourse to every expedient to raise money and support for their causes and, therefore, to surrender control of local clergy to local powers. What had been rare before became normal; what had been permissible in success became oppressive in defeat. Unable to refuse the peremptory commands of the growing state, ecclesiastical critics escaped into angry denunciations of the rival pontiffs. They likened papal taxes upon those assuming ecclesiastical office to simony. Justifiable when devoted to happy peace at home and successful crusade abroad, indulgences and penitential campaigns appeared to be as immoral as they were unsuccessful when sunk in the popes' efforts to reconquer or hold their place in Italy. Everywhere, local churchmen objected to papal or curial regulation, and the lesser clergy frequently tried to impose upon their prelates standards of behavior which they themselves rarely attained. Voices were heard—John Wycliffe (c. 1329–1384) in England, John Hus in Bohemia (c. 1369–1415)—urging laymen to “reform” the church if the clergy would not, and threatening secession from its communion were this not undertaken. Finally, a mounting desire to obliterate this extremist dissent, to reestablish church unity, and, at the same time, to “reform” the church “in head and members” led to a revival of conciliar ideas. At Pisa in 1409, again at Constance in 1414, and lastly at Basel in 1431, the clergy assembled in great councils to preserve their church.

Although the church was unified at the councils, the conciliar movement itself largely failed. Rigoristic reformism pushed to the point of heresy helped to defeat it. Hus was burned at Constance in 1415, but the conciliar fathers could not suppress his movement, a national secession of the Bohemians that was never to be wholly eradicated. Conciliar “democracy” also threatened prelacy. Although bishops happily “reformed” Rome or diminished curial prerogatives, they did not enjoy being “reformed” by their own subordinates, who took over the direction of the councils toward the end. And if princes gained much from the conflict between pope and council, they were soon reminded both by alert popes and by experience with their own estates or parliaments that secular and ecclesiastical monarchy had much in common. By the end of the last council at Basel, princes and popes had combined to defeat conciliarism. Arrayed in ecumenical orders, the still vigorous Mendicants as well as the decrepit monks found little voice at the councils, bodies dominated by the local secular clergy. They therefore seceded and gave the fathers little help. Besides, tradition threw its weight to Rome. Negotiating for church unity, the representatives of the Greek Orthodox communion disappointed the

conciliar fathers by turning from them to the papacy. Lastly, after their initial enthusiastic support of the conciliar idea, the local clergy began to have second thoughts about overthrowing the popes and entrusting themselves wholly to the citizens and princes of their fatherland. That a contract between a nation and its church such as the French Pragmatic of Bourges of 1438 wherein were enshrined Gallican liberties and ecclesiastical freedom should in fact so profit the prince and so little advance "reform" or freedom was enough teaching on this point. The clergy were gradually becoming aware that they were replacing an ecclesiastical with a secular master, one whose capital was much nearer to their parishes than Rome. What had begun with high hopes at Pisa and Constance petered out in despair during the interminable council at Basel that closed in 1449.

Although Rome seemed to have won the day, nothing could have been further from the truth. After the councils had failed, a combat with the cardinals of the Sacred College, the senate of the church, rent Rome until the Protestant revolution. Even the conciliar idea was not wholly moribund; it was revived by the kings of France to force concessions from the papacy. Furthermore, the nations were clearly winning. The national organization of the clergy had been recognized at both Pisa and Constance, and had been partly confirmed by papal concordats with the traditional national churches in 1417. After the councils, the Italian nation also won its case. It was not long before the pontifical office and the Roman curia became Italian monopolies. This did not much hurt France, Spain, or the Hapsburgs in southern Germany. These close neighbors, always prompt to intervene in Italian affairs, could exact substantial advantages from reluctant Rome. For governments farther away, however, such as England or the German princely states, things were not so easy. To the old but now increasingly feverish complaints about money flowing to Rome were added fears that Rome's concessions to the Hapsburgs or to France prejudiced northern interests. In this circumstance, a new "reformism," one that could no longer take the conciliar way, was about to be born.

These changes in institutions were accompanied by a gradual transformation of the ways intellectuals dealt with the world. The implicit naturalism of the age when Aristotle was received in the Western schools had always elicited opposition, even when expressed by such a prestigious figure as Thomas Aquinas. The assertion that man's natural reason enabled him to comprehend a substantial part of God's mystery and to attune himself to nature, God's creation, is strong stuff in any age. Nor was this opposition merely an echo of Bernard of Clairvaux's earlier doubt that human reason could explain the mysteries of revealed religion or the real quandaries of man's life. This doubt provided one set of questions, of

course, but there were others derived from the "realism" of an age that had sought to link God, nature, and man, and that had therefore somewhat "divinized" man and his institutions. Otherwise conflicting schools of thought, the extremist naturalists called the Parisian Averroists and Bonaventure's (1221-1274) antinaturalist Augustinians, agreed on one thing, namely that the teachings of natural philosophy simply could not be accorded with the experience of the faith or the needs of man's hope. Indeed, according to John Duns Scotus (c. 1264-1308) and his followers, the desire to link God with the world risked binding the divine spirit, the very principle of freedom, to the necessary sequences of mundane experience. To these grave criticisms of the thirteenth century, circumstances added several new ones during the later Middle Ages. One of these was the fact that the Aristotelian-Thomistic position was closely linked to the institutions that flowered in the thirteenth century, which were precisely those institutions that were being cast down later on. Another and more consequential debility was that a naturalist philosophy is unsatisfactory in an age when men seem best to express themselves in civil war and when nature itself seems determined to be as unlovable as possible.

Around 1300, men first tried to save the naturalist and "realist" philosophies of the past, sometimes by attacking the competence of earlier spokesmen and sometimes by extending the system into a kind of totalitarianism. Roger Bacon (c. 1214-1292) and Raymond Lull (c. 1235-1315) endeavored to unify all knowledge by means of the certitudes of mathematics. These intellectual schemes, moreover, were often wedded to a dream in which Christian progress would create a perfect society, headed by pope or prince, designed both to conquer nature for man and to unify the world for Christ. Some were also apocalyptic. Bacon, for example, thought to mobilize Christendom to defeat the coming Antichrist, cruel precursor of a happy age to come. Others dreamed of reanimating the crusade or of converting Muslims, Jews, pagans, indeed, the world. The failure of these hopes, however, led to a recession of this kind of utopian and progressive thought after 1350.

On the other hand, now stripped of quasi-scientific Aristotelianism, the "realist's" sense that the only true reality in the world and its institutions was the divine essence flourished as never before. This was sometimes expressed in mystic experience. To the mystics, orthodox or not, who pululated in the later Middle Ages, the individual's relationship to, or unity with, the divine became far more important than his institutional affiliation. Those less mystic, as Wycliffe or even Hus, were convinced that the only reality serving to justify human institutions was immediate conformity to the divine design. While often encouraging quietism or personal withdrawal, such views also led either to an anarchic individualism that left

the church no serious role to play in salvation's plan or, as in Wycliffe's teaching, to outright rejection of the practical institutional structures of this world, ecclesiastical and secular

Another way of handling the problem of naturalism and "realism" and, incidentally, of avoiding their hazards, was to admit that man's reason and experience of nature provided only insufficient analogies to enable him to understand the truths of faith and revelation. Although this idea was far from new, the greater richness of the Latin philosophical tradition enabled men to propound the autonomy of the various sciences, theological and natural, even before 1300. In theology or the faith could be discovered a reality of psychic certainty or conviction that could not be found in the probabilistic world of nature and philosophical reason. As developed by Duns Scotus and William of Ockham (c. 1300–c. 1349) and their followers, this "terminism" or philosophical discretion freed the deity from being bound by definitions applicable only to his creations in nature—something distinctly to his advantage in an age of plagues, famines, and civil wars. The distinction between what is heavenly and what earthly enabled thinkers of this persuasion to view the actual institutions of this world less censoriously than enthusiasts of the "realist" commitment. It was his dislike of their distinctions that made Wycliffe anathema to Parisian theologians, and that in turn made them exaggerate Hus's views and have him burned at the Council of Constance. In brief, the men of the Ockhamist *via moderna* were often profoundly conservative. Their separation of heaven from earth often enabled them to live without too great a straining of conscience among fallible men and confessedly imperfect institutions.

To cut heaven from earth, however, does not always bring peace. The danger of separating philosophy from theology, as did the Parisian Averroist John of Jandun (d. 1328), was that, to preserve theology from earth's contamination, philosophy had to be given a nearly complete autonomy to fulfill man's earthly life in terms of natural moral ends. John's companion, Marsiglio of Padua (c. 1275–1342), applied this standard to government and the church, contrasting the freedom of divine precept with the coerciveness of human law and legislation. As a result, although retaining an educational function, the earthly church became a creation of man's history, subordinate to his will, and deprived of an innate capacity to force obedience. Although intending only to "reform" it, these men of the 1300's had begun to strip the sacred garniture from the church militant, a decisive step in the direction of modern secularism.

Naturally, the schoolmen of the *via moderna* did not go so far. Ockham and his followers rarely doubted that God had clearly and directly defined the earthly church. Inadvertently, however, their inquiry as to how He had done this practically reduced the sources of indisputable authority to the

sparse and vague recommendations of the New Testament. What had been built since then, the real church of history with its theoretical superiority over lay power, could be judged only in terms of relative probabilities deduced from history or from the varying weights of conflicting authorities. Although not revolutionary, then, the *via moderna* was terribly ambivalent, and transformed psychic conviction into mere intellectual probability. As Luther (1483–1546) was to show, revolution could come from this source. Its emphasis upon the New Testament as the sole source of authority reinforced a desire to bring the church back to the pristine simplicity it supposedly once possessed. Resigned to the necessary imperfection of man and his institutions, moreover, its adherent could avoid Hus's fate, and seek friends and alliances which although imperfect or even corrupt could help "reform" the church.

Paralleling these intellectual changes was the continuance of the secularization of learning. As early as around 1300, lay intellectuals, although rarely equal to the clerical schoolmen of their day, invaded fields hitherto reserved to the clergy. A jurist, Peter Dubois (c. 1250–1312), proposed to "reform" the church, to abolish its military orders, and drastically to cut back monasticism. Dante Alighieri (1265–1321) rehearsed theological and philosophical arguments to prove that, in the world, secular authority was equal to ecclesiastical. The noble missionary Raymond Lull and the pope's doctor, Arnold of Villanova (c. 1240–1313), won reputations or notoriety for theological speculation.

The increasing awareness of the distinction between theology and natural and moral philosophy, moreover, gave added meaning to the slow recuperation of classical texts and traditions. Roger Bacon early claimed that, although lacking the Christian dispensation, Cicero's or Seneca's moral teaching was as good as or better than any available in Christian writings. And if Petrarch (1304–1374) still lamented "his" Cicero's polytheism, others had long since excused him by claiming that pagan pundits mentioned the cults of their day not out of admiration, but only to discipline the plebs—a sentiment not unknown to the later theologians of the *via moderna*, who blushed at the practices in the popular church of their day. Indeed, the attempt of Averroists like Siger of Brabant (d. 1282) and John of Jandun to discuss free will, immortality, or the aim of man's terrestrial life in terms of what Aristotle and other philosophers had said shows that although they had no intention of destroying the faith, the Christian vision had already become only one of several dealing with the great questions of religion and man's fate.

To add to this, the church lost a large part of its ancient ideal of progress. In its age of growth, the church moved with a sense of advancement, producing ever new orders, ever new devotions, ever unfolding new teachings to aid man in his ascent toward heaven. At its apogee, a moment

so full of friction, this sense had evoked from enthusiasts, especially Franciscan extremists, a rigid and revolutionary conception of progress defined by a historically timed sequence of ages of spiritual ascent. The failure of these utopian fancies as well as the repression of their exponents had induced churchmen and other intellectuals to turn away from this idea. From Bonaventure to Petrarch, this was partly replaced by accenting the progress toward God of each individual during his life upon earth, and by rejecting the notion of the future improvement of the church itself in history.

Although efficacious in amplifying a strong man's sense of purpose, this was a real defeat for the church as an institution, for it took away its "religion" of history by making it surrender to secular man and his institutions the deceptive but ever appealing hope of moral progress in history. By the time of Cola di Rienzi, tribune of the people and proto-tyrant of Rome in 1347 and 1354, the secularization of the idea of progress, with its whole apparatus of successive and ever better ages, of prophetic men who come before their time, and with its consolations of inevitable future joys, was well under way.

As the luster of the medieval church dimmed, Europe's secular institutions began to shine ever more brightly. Rome's ancient myths and those of the early medieval sacral monarchies were applied anew to decorate the new principates and states. Nations, thinking of their citizens as sons of Aeneas, superior to others by virtue of race and innate genius, began to view themselves as God's repositories of freedom. By-products of Aristotelian thought reinforced this particularism. The idea became common that geography, climate, or even astral determination selected those frontiers within which men were naturally endowed with a will to be free, to govern themselves, or to dominate others. Each people found in its character or institutions perfect embodiments of these flattering myths. Thirteenth-century German publicists praised their people's ability to rule others, and saw in their elected monarchy a proof of the peculiar freedom of the German spirit. The idea of the natural *franchise* of all things French and of all Frenchmen was equally popular on the other side of the Rhine. John Fortescue's (c. 1394–1476) praise of England's free law and glorious constitution is too close to today's versions of these tales to be described here. None of these ideas was altogether new, but all flourished and multiplied in the later Middle Ages because the unity of Christendom was disintegrating. That a new and unifying idea of Europe, an intrinsically secular one, was being born is beyond doubt, but its effects were not yet felt and were anyway always to be subordinated to the particularism of Europe's parts.

As regional states or nations-to-be were being raised up, so were the

individuals who led them. This age of crisis discovered an astonishing cast of princes, soldiers, merchants, and artists. Possessed by an exaggerated desire for career or advancement, they suited the monarchies or principalities in which they flourished, for they combated established aristocracies and old interest groups. Many among them were those whose virtue or service to a prince enabled them to rise from humble origins. They were schooled and they served in a time of almost unimaginable coerciveness. Although this contributed to the general psychic malaise of the age, the constant threat of force drove a few to shine with unprecedented brilliance. Greatness also had ready models and fitting rewards. Princes were given full power (*arbitraria potestas*) to lift up those who served them or to crush those who stood in their way. In lesser measure, their captains, intellectuals, men of money, and artists were granted the same gratification. Like the estate royal in its relationship to the estates or orders of its subjects, the greatest men were of no one single order. Giotto of Florence (c. 1267–1337), John Hawkwood (d. 1394), and Jacques Coeur were practitioners of no one craft or business. Nevertheless, theirs was not a wholly arbitrary world. The corporate organization of society and enterprise built a stable standard for judging an individual or a group. This structure told even the greatest man that he had a game to play and that it had rules.

There was another dimension here too. Churchmen had rarely denied that all who lived well and faithfully were as good in God's eyes as the religious. This idea had begun to put on social garb when the church ruled the West, when even clerks were tempted to believe that a just judge was more valuable to Christendom than a monk. As the church declined, this principle began to obviate the need for the religious as a special social group. At the Council of Constance, the fathers expressly repudiated the claim that a *religio*—or membership in an order—lent a man a special claim to God's love. The day had begun when the good man, whatever his earthly vocation, could be a monk in his inner calling. In the new world being created in the later Middle Ages, one did not have to be a monk, a priest, or a prophet to have justification. It was enough to be a great artist or captain, indeed, to be a great or a good man at anything.

It is perhaps this unification of the practical and spiritual in the soul of each man, itself the very essence of later secularism, that is the greatest legacy of the later Middle Ages. That it had "advantages," there is no doubt. Without the spiritual liberation of the professions of learning, knowledge would still be impeded by external and ecclesiastical restraints. Without the loosening of the soldier's profession from ecclesiastical inhibitions, Europe's culture would not have conquered the world. On the other hand, born of combat between men and of an almost superhuman effort to comprehend everything within the heart of each and every man, this legacy also imposed

upon Western man a grave psychic strain that has only now begun to destroy modern Europe's secular religions and philosophies.

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35 The Jews in Medieval Europe

In 425, Gamaliel VI, patriarch of the Jews of the Roman Empire, died without a male heir, and Theodosius II abolished the Jewish patriarchate permanently. Although the Jews of the world probably still numbered well over three million, there was a solid basis for the Christian hope that Judaism would soon be unknown. Palestine had become so depopulated of Jews and the Jews at large so sapped of energy for concentrated activity—they had even failed to bring to fruition the grant of Julian to rebuild their temple in Jerusalem (361)—that no protest was heard when the last symbol of centralized Jewish autonomy had been withdrawn. Moreover, the Jews had sustained several legal blows at the hands of virtually every Christian emperor. Forbidden in the fourth century to proselytize, build new synagogues, own Christian slaves, or hold political office, they had patently lost some of the basic privileges formerly conceded them as a *religio licita* and perhaps, since 212, as full Roman citizens. Finally, although there was still a vast Jewish population in Persia living under an exilarch and with an effective network of Jewish courts and communal services, in view of the

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| A.D. | c. 359 | Jewish calendar committed to writing by Hillel II |
| | 425 | End of Jewish patriarchate |
| | 425–475 | Compilation of Palestinian Talmud |
| | 613–711 | Visigothic persecutions of the Jews in Spain |
| | 813–840 | Reign of Louis the Pious, earliest known diplomas of privileges to Jews |
| 1040–1105 | | Rashi (Solomon ben Isaac of Troyes), commentator on Bible and Babylonian Talmud |
| | 1144 | Death of William of Norwich; beginning of medieval blood accusation |
| | 1215 | Fourth Lateran Council; yellow badge |
| | 1290 | Expulsion of Jews from England |
| | 1306 | Expulsion of Jews from France |
| | 1348 | Black Death persecutions; beginning of ghettoization in Germany |
| | 1391 | Pogroms in Spain; beginning of Marranism |
| | 1481 | Inquisition proceedings begin in Spain |
| | 1492 | Expulsion of Jews from Spain |
| | 1516 | Establishment of ghetto in Venice |
| 1648–1658 | | Chmielnicki uprisings and massacres in Ukraine and Poland |
| | 1666 | Sabbetai Zevi's abortive messianic movement collapses |

sealed borders between Rome and Persia, the Jews of the empire were largely cut off from their Babylonian brethren.

However, the Jews had not lost all their vigor, certainly not their tenacity to their faith, ritual, and communal separation, nor even their readiness to win new adherents. Socially and economically no worse off than their gentile neighbors, in most cases they found the new deprivations more humiliating than troublesome. Few Jews had ever owned slaves, and even fewer had ever nourished hopes of attaining political office. Even when old synagogues became unusable, services could be conducted wherever a "quorum" (*munyan*) of Jews and a Torah scroll could be mustered. As for missionary activity, not all Jews had approved such efforts even when they had been licit. While aggressive proselytizers of necessity had to become circumspect, conversion to Judaism was never totally renounced or stopped.

Second, the upheavals that traumatized the empire during the barbarian invasions affected the Jews *as a group* considerably less than they did many another people of Europe. Heirs to a diaspora mentality for more than nine centuries, the mobility forced by the successive incursions of Goths, Vandals, and Lombards was probably less unsettling for Jews than for others. Engaging in a variety of handicrafts as well as in agriculture and sailing, they were especially well represented among the itinerant merchants known as "Syrian traders." Not that the Jews were the Bedouin of Europe. Outside of Palestine and Parthia they were largely concentrated in the great cities—Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, Rome. On the other hand, what Strabo had observed of them in the days of Octavian Augustus was even more true in the days of Romulus Augustulus: "Hardly a city of the civilized world has failed to absorb them." Hence, when forced to take to the road, they readily found comrades at the next stop.

Finally, while the machinery for centralized religious direction had been removed and the great rabbinic academies of Palestine had either closed down or dwindled to insignificance, the Jews of the Diaspora had long since overcome total dependence on them. The procedures for the regulation of the Jewish calendar, the backbone of Jewish observance and for centuries the guarded privilege of the patriarchate, had been reduced to theoretical principles and committed to writing and publicized by a Palestinian patriarch, Hillel II (c. 359). The basic principles of Jewish law had been compiled and issued as the Palestinian Talmud (c. 425–475), and this was followed in the sixth century by several compilations of rabbinic homily, known as midrash, which provided the rationale for Jewish faith. The conditions favorable to the preservation of a basically uniform Jewish culture without recourse to Palestine thus lay at hand. No testimony to the wide currency of these works is as revealing as Justinian's proscription of Jewish "deuteriosis" (rabbinic law and exegesis).

While Justinian's measure was not totally effective, the increased tempo

and violence of anti-Jewish preaching and activity did have effects. Repeated expulsions, occasionally accompanied by massacre (Alexandria, 411; Antioch, 592, Jerusalem, 630), decrees of compulsory baptism (Spain, 613; Byzantium, 632; Gaul, 633, perhaps also in northern Italy, 661), popular riots, interminable denunciations in Church councils along with prohibitions of normal social intercourse between Jews and Christians, and civil disabilities everywhere made the sixth and especially the seventh centuries a dark age for European Jewry. Many converted to Christianity. Others feigned Christianity or fled to outlying areas. But a long tradition of faith and rationalization of adverse circumstances, along with several external factors, enabled a sufficient number to weather the storm.

Paradoxically, the very same Rome that was now bent on crushing the Jews was largely responsible for their survival. However Christian the empire may have become, it never quite eradicated many of the legacies of its Latin past. Paramount among these was the Roman reverence for law and precedent, which dictated the right of the Jews to live as Jews with their own judges, teachers, and institutions. The extreme decrees of proscription were never totally enforced, and in the original heart of the empire Gregory the Great reaffirmed the principle that became normative for Christian prelates and monarchs: "Even as the Jews ought not be permitted to do . . . more than is legally permitted them, so ought they not suffer the curtailment of those [rights] which have been conceded them." The Jews were thus classified as tolerated infidels rather than as heretics who could expect no quarter.

Nor were the Jews unique in their resistance to orthodox Christendom. The Church never quite overcame heresy and schism; neither it nor the state was ever totally free to concentrate solely on the Jews. And by the middle of the eighth century an entirely new set of factors had actually tipped the scales in the Jews' favor.

The rise of the Carolingian monarchy simultaneously with the great conquests of Islam facilitated open Jewish community life in most areas of the Western world. Indeed, the methods of government of Latin Christians as well as of Muslims actually made it advantageous in many respects to remain Jewish. Having to rule over vast territories in which they represented minority elements, Franks as well as Arabs gladly exploited Jewish talents. Abolishing the later Roman institution of personal citizenship, the new Christian rulers dealt with the Jews by defining their rights contractually. Most commonly the king, local count, or archbishop granted a group of Jews a charter guaranteeing their rights to engage in business and live as a self-governing community in return for special imposts to be collected by the Jews themselves. The rulers were thus assured a steady

income from a group in whose interests it lay to develop the commercial vitality of their area. Since they had conceded them special benefits, the rulers could be confident of Jewish loyalty.

Jews were quick to respond to these opportunities, and many settled in cathedral towns or county seats under the supervision of men of means and learning of their own faith. Spires, Worms, Mayence, Troyes, Paris, Narbonne—these were but a few of the centers where a rapidly growing Jewish population engaged mainly in commerce. By 1020 the Jews of the Holy Roman Empire had become a sizable and conspicuous group and had begun to take their cultural destiny into their own hands.

Academies of higher learning sprang up in the great urban centers, generating a flurry of literary creativity (in Italy as early as the tenth century and in France and Germany in the eleventh century and after). Although the Jewish culture of these countries rested on the same scriptural and Talmudic foundations as that of Jews of Muslim lands, it quickly developed into a separate cultural branch popularly known as Ashkenazic (from the medieval Hebrew name for Germany) that reflected the atmosphere of the dominant milieu. The new literature consisted principally of commentaries on Scripture and rabbinic literature, anthologies of law, exempla, liturgical poetry, religious history, and, later on, mystical treatises. While ingenuously claiming to preserve a tradition that was impervious to outside pressures, the commentaries of Rashi, the itinerant Abraham ibn Ezra, and the Kimhis of the Provence dovetailed neatly with the needs of a subculture living in an age and area predicated on faith in scriptural revelation and ultimate retribution in the final judgment. Hence, while the Jew lived in a world committed to excoriating and converting him, he found that the premises and more than a few of the forms of his own civilization had been appropriated by his overlords. The endless dispute between Judaism and Christianity was conducted in a context of shared premises.

For more than three and a half centuries Jewish society in Europe flourished. Even in Byzantium the caesaropapist rulers saw the advantage of letting the Jews practice their faith, and traditionally rabbinic and sectarian Karaite communities lived side by side. While wealthier Jews functioned principally as merchants, with interests as far as Egypt and India, the occupational distribution of pre-Crusade Jewry ran a gamut of pursuits—from farming and handicrafts to medicine and slave trading. Conflicts with Christians were rare and quickly settled. No one could foresee the calamity that struck the Jews in 1096 and the subsequent steady decline in their position in all of Europe north of the Pyrenees.

The first rumors of the intention of the Crusaders to purge Europe of its "Christ killers" were dismissed as pure hysteria; as a result whole com-

munities of German Jews paid with their wealth, lives, or forced baptism.* The denunciation of such riots by the papacy and by Bernard of Clairvaux, coupled with effective measures by the emperor, prevented a recurrence of the catastrophe in the Second Crusade (1147). However, the onslaughts proved to be more than an ephemeral outburst. Deep-seated hostilities, nourished by a steady stream of clerical fulminations, had surfaced. Guild and merchant burghers exploited Christian theory for their economic interests and demanded the isolation of the Jews. Although the papacy adhered to its position of opposing violence, it, too, revived the old conciliar provisions for their humiliation, social sequestration, and relegation to occupational misery. Usury, a pursuit originally as hateful to the Jew as to the heirs to his Biblical ethos, now became his principal outlet, one with which he lived in cynical and bitter resignation. Aaron of York, the archetype of Shylock, learned to live by his cash and wits, and, if need be, to pack bag and baggage and start anew elsewhere.

A formidable coalition of mob, church, and state drove the Jews to the periphery, and ultimately quite out, of medieval society. Excluded from trade, handicrafts, and the professions, deprived of the right to bear arms, the Jew by the thirteenth century was treated as a necessary evil whose only claim to toleration lay in his monetary usefulness as a "servant of the royal treasury." Ecclesiastical campaigns against usury soon resulted in the frequent cancellation of Jewish claims, confiscation of Jewish estates, and the refusal of civil authorities to enforce notes. The wars against the Catharist and Albigensian heresies were followed by a concerted drive to convert the Jews. The Fourth Lateran Council (1215) enjoined temporal rulers to compel Jews and Muslims to wear a badge distinguishing them from Christians, to curtail Jewish traffic in money, and to confine Jewish worship to forms that would not give offense to Christian sensibilities. Subsequently, the new Dominican order was empowered to preach to the Jews in their own synagogues. These decrees were capped by sporadic mob attacks and mass arrests for ritual murder and desecration of the host, "proved," on occasion, by torture. The intensification of popular piety and the growing resentment against Jewish usury culminated in a series of expulsions: from England in 1290, Normandy in 1296, France in 1306 and again in 1394—to mention but the most notorious of them. In Germany, where the emperor depended on the good will of local dukes and margraves, the Jews led a precarious and checkered existence, characterized by local contracts permitting them to reside in limited numbers, often for a specified number of years. Inevitably a growing number gravitated to eastern Europe where

* The Holy Roman Emperor, Henry IV, distracted by more immediate threats to his power, did what little he could to quiet the atmosphere and permitted the forcibly baptized to revert to their faith.

Jews were welcome and accorded special privileges reminiscent of the days of the Carolingians. Others continued to live in the Papal States, where the popes (often governed in their own area more by interests of state than by Christian theory) permitted them to live as their wards. But by far the largest and most prosperous Jewish population in the fourteenth century was the one in Spain, where well-organized communities enjoyed the special protection of the rulers of Aragon and Castile.

Thanks to favorable conditions, Sephardic Judaism, as the Spanish branch is called, continued to encompass the most diverse social and religious types. Never as monolithically orthodox as its Ashkenazic sister, Spanish Jewry included a long line of courtiers—diplomats, tax collectors, physicians, astronomers, and translators who made their careers in the royal service—and of intellectuals—from outright Averroists and Bible critics to sophisticated mystics, professional poets, simple fundamentalists, and a few who gained distinction as translators of works of Arabic philosophy and science, thereby gaining for the Jews the title of “cultural middlemen of Europe.”

However, even in Spain upheaval and dissolution began in the fourteenth century. The growing restiveness of the Third Estate in Spain bestirred the Jewish masses to demand a greater voice in communal affairs and more equitable conditions for themselves. Social cleavages, open and often intense, frequently resulted in conflicts between the old Jewish aristocracy and the rapidly increasing *nouveaux riches* that could be resolved only by royal intervention. The miasma of Christian fanaticism traversed the Pyrenees steadily. Dominican preaching, ritual accusations, factional intrigues against Jewish courtiers, together with the ravages of the Black Death combined to unsettle the Jewish communities.

The first blow came swiftly and terribly during the interregnum of 1391. Fanned long and hard by a fanatical archdeacon of Seville, the riots spread quickly. While thousands of Jews died as martyrs, several hundred thousand saved their skins by accepting baptism. Since by Christian theory such baptism was binding, open “relapse” to Judaism was prosecuted as heresy. Accordingly, while some fled to safer shores, the overwhelming majority remained at least formally Christian. Of these, many thousands adhered privately to the faith of their fathers (thereby earning the Spanish epithet of Marrano, or “swine”). Moreover, since as “New Christians” they could exercise their diplomatic and commercial talents without restraint, and simultaneously pursue the traditional Jewish course of supporting a strong central monarchy, they soon found the hatred once reserved for all Jews directed principally at them. A wave of despair in the ranks of the Jews themselves swelled the ranks of the New Christians in 1413–1415 and, in turn, intensified the hostility of the lower classes of Old

Christians against the Marranos. A wave of anti-Marrano pogroms was followed by a flood of vitriolic pamphlets and an undisguised campaign of social ostracism all over Spain. In desperation, many New Christians lent sympathetic ears to Jews and Judaizing Marranos, and Marrano communities mushroomed, with their own churches, synagogues, cemeteries, and guilds. Others, particularly the highly placed, demanded an official inquisition that would extirpate the backsliders and clear the remainder once and for all. The Spanish Inquisition, which began its proceedings in 1481, initiated a series of revelations and a wave of terror that shook Spain to its foundations. Finally yielding to the claims of the Grand Inquisitor, Tomás de Torquemada, that the presence of Jews in Spain was the chief source of New Christian backsliding, the Catholic monarchs issued their decree of expulsion in the summer of 1492. Four years later, Portugal followed suit, thereby completing the task of purging the peninsula of open Jewish adherence.

While the Reformation and Counter Reformation brought new miseries to the remnants of Occidental Jewry—most notably in Italy, where walled ghettos were established in all major cities—the migration of some 200,000 Jews swelled the established Jewish settlements in Italy, eastern Europe, and the Ottoman Empire, and generated new ones in Holland, England, and France. Sephardic culture enjoyed a revival in Italy, Holland, and the Ottoman Empire only to suffer a major setback in the Near East following the collapse in 1666 of the messianic movement led by Sabbetai Zevi.

In eastern Europe, however, Jewish life attained a new autonomy and richness that persisted despite increased violence and persecutions after 1648. But these communities were largely isolated from the mainstream of European society. For them, now the majority of European Jewry, the Middle Ages did not actually end until 1917. However, echoes of a new age had long since permeated their “pale of settlement,” stimulating the bearers of the oldest living culture of Europe to seek new horizons.

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Byzantium

36 Early Byzantium

No contemporary of medieval Constantinople, or rather New Rome, would ever have doubted that it was the center of the civilized Christian world, the one and incomparable city. "We knew not whether we were in heaven or on earth," a wonder-stricken ambassador of the prince of Kiev reported late in the tenth century to his master. "For on earth there is no such splendor or such beauty, and we are at a loss how to describe it." Nearly two centuries later, this awe still found an echo in a leader of the Latin army preparing to capture the city for the first time:

. . . those who had never seen Constantinople marvelled greatly at it, for they could not conceive that the world held so mighty a city, when they saw the height of the walls, the great towers enclosing it all around, the splendid palaces, the lofty churches (the number of which was so great that none could believe it who had not seen it with his own eyes), and the length and breadth of the city that lorded it over all others. And know ye that there was no man so bold that his flesh did not creep thereat, and this was no wonder. . . .

Nevertheless, the epithet "Byzantine" has acquired a connotation of intrigue, degeneracy, and treachery, inherited from Edward Gibbon, whose masterpiece has blinded its readers to the fact that the *Decline and Fall* of his Roman Empire required some eleven centuries, a span as yet unequaled by the healthiest body politic.

Even for the medieval specialist, Byzantine history often proves bewildering, for it refuses to conform to the accepted criteria of what is normally regarded as the Middle Ages. All the characteristic aspects and institutions of this period in western Europe—a decentralized, deurbanized world supported by an agricultural economy, held together by the complicated human bonds of feudal loyalties, and focused on the church as its central institution—seem to disappear east of the Elbe, south of the Danube, and in the lands of the eastern Mediterranean during most of the

- A.D. 330 Dedication of the city of Constantinople
- 527–565 Reign of Justinian I the Great
 - 578 The Slavs reach the Peloponnese
 - 610 Accession of Heraclius I
 - 636 First Arab defeat of Byzantium; beginning of the conquest of Syria and Asia Minor
 - 641 Arab conquest of Byzantine Egypt
 - 717 Lifting of the last Arab siege of Constantinople by Leo III
- 717–796 Isaurian dynasty
- 726–730 Beginning of the Iconoclastic Controversy
 - 763 Constantine V's victory over the Bulgars at Anchialus
 - 787 Restoration of images by the Second Council of Nicaea
 - 796 Coup d'état of Irene
 - 800 Coronation of Charlemagne at Rome
 - 813 First Bulgar siege of Constantinople
 - 815 Beginning of the second period of Iconoclasm
- 820–867 Amorian dynasty
 - 828 Arabs begin the conquest of Byzantine Sicily
 - 838 Arabs take Amorium
 - 843 Council of Orthodoxy ends the Iconoclastic controversy
 - 863 Michael III's victory over the Arabs at Poson
- 863–864 Cyrillo-Methodian mission to the Slavs
 - 864 Conversion of Boris-Michael of Bulgaria
 - 867 Murder of Michael III; accession of Basil I the Macedonian

millennium separating the dedication of Constantinople by Constantine I in A.D. 330 and the loss of the city to Islam in 1453.

The state which developed on the shores of the Bosphorus and which dominated the imagination and often the reality of the contemporary world until the twelfth century responded to other traditions and loyalties. It has been characterized as a combination of Greek culture, Roman institutions, and Christianity, but it may be identified equally satisfactorily by the three objects of its ascending allegiance: the City, the Emperor, the Faith.

The city of New Rome, on which loyalties focused increasingly with the gradually shrinking boundaries of the Empire until it came to be almost coterminous with the State, represented for its citizens far more than the great geopolitical center admired by later generations. It was founded as the heir of the Old Rome with all the privileges and prerogatives of the former capital of the classical world, but cleansed of its pagan associations. The presence within its walls of the Church of the Holy Wisdom (Hagia Sophia) in which the emperors were crowned made of it simultaneously an image of the Heavenly Jerusalem, and supernatural guardians watched over its safety. So enormous was the prestige of Constantinople that even its Muslim foes believed that its capture would be the ultimate heroic deed heralding the trumpets of the Last Judgment and the coming of the Messiah. The safety of the city guaranteed the survival of the empire and of Christianity itself.

The emperor was likewise heir to the rights and powers of the Roman *autocrat*, but he, too, far transcended their limitations. As "Friend" and even more as "Imitator" of Christ, he left behind all human glories to become the image of the Heavenly King. From the days of Constantine I, official theory maintained that "as there is one God . . . so there is one king. . . . Crowned in the image of heavenly kingship he steers and guides men on earth according to the pattern of his prototype," and eight centuries later a Byzantine official still admonished his son to serve the ruler ". . . as if he were God." The emperor was Christ's vicar on earth and His co-ruler, his true state symbolized by the great purple and gold double throne, half of it empty to mortal eyes, on which he transacted all official affairs.

Opposition to the emperor "crowned by God" was blasphemy and sacrilege, yet beyond his omnipotence loomed the orthodoxy of the faith. Throughout the history of Byzantium the problem of orthodoxy dominated all others. The highly trained logical minds of the theologians and intellectuals and the passionate devotion of the people demanded clear-cut, if subtle, formulas and a wholehearted adherence to them. The empire could exist only if the purity and uniformity of its faith mirrored that of the Heavenly Kingdom. The only possible challenge to the imperial authority

was in defense of the faith, through the demonstration that, far from being the image of Christ, the emperor was the image of the Antichrist. Behind the agitated and often bloody history of the Byzantine state, characterized like its Russian successor, as "autocracy tempered by assassination," stands the unshakable conviction of the people that the empire was the direct reflection of God's will, and their ultimate allegiance, transcending all earthly loyalties, to their conception of the Christian faith.

The dominance of the emperor and the centralization of the state give a curiously classical aspect to the Byzantine empire while simultaneously seeming to prefigure the absolutism of early modern times, but they awaken no reminiscence of the hierarchical feudal monarchy of the medieval West. Similarly the urban structure, commercial economy, elaborate bureaucracy, and literate society which characterize most of Byzantine history seem atypical to students of the European Middle Ages, whose tendency has consequently been to isolate Byzantium from the contemporary world or to ignore it altogether. This conscious or tacit estrangement of the two halves of the Mediterranean is not of recent date—some of it was quasi-inherent and could be traced back to Antiquity—but the first overt manifestations of antagonism do not seem to antedate the seventh century.

Not even the difficult period following Justinian's death in 565 was sufficient to bring about a total restructure of the society which preceded it. When Heraclius I, the son of the governor of Carthage, arrived at Constantinople in 610 at the head of a victorious fleet to found a new imperial dynasty, the Mediterranean was still the central link in the empire. In spite of the Lombard invasion of Italy and the presence of native barbarian dynasties in Gaul and Spain, most of the rulers in the West formally acknowledged their inferiority to the imperial majesty. Far from stressing his independence, King Childebert of the Franks addressed his letters to "the glorious, pious, eternal, renowned, and triumphant Lord, ever Augustus, my father, the Emperor Maurice." Even Pope Gregory the Great recognized the authority of the emperor and awaited the imperial confirmation of his election before assuming the responsibilities of the Roman see. The social and economic transformation of the empire from the Late Roman pattern of vast estates cultivated by tenants bound to their land to one of free peasant communities composed of small farms granted by the state in return for military service was incomplete and gradual. Nevertheless, the presence of deep-rooted dissimilarities beneath the seemingly smooth surface of cultural uniformity and continuity provided a constant and fundamental source of misunderstandings and alienation ever ready for exploitation.

At the height of Roman unification distinctions had survived between

the Greek-speaking East and the Latin West, between the richer, intellectual, and urbanized Orient, where cities such as Alexandria, Antioch, and Athens traced their cultural and political pedigrees far beyond Roman pretensions, and the poorer, predominantly rural, and recently civilized Occident, which owed most of its institutions to the Latin conquerors. By the end of the sixth century, these distinctions were intensifying. The Roman veneer was wearing thin in the western Mediterranean, in spite of Justinian's partial reconquest, whereas the eastern provinces, preserved from the horrors of barbarian invasions, continued to flourish, their institutions, schools, and economy unimpaired, their classical tradition unaltered.

The unifying effect of the Christian faith, which had replaced to some degree that of Roman political centralization, was similarly undermined by the divergent Latin and Greek traditions in the choice of scriptural authorities. From the earliest Christianization of the empire, the West distinguished more clearly between "the things which are Caesar's" and "the things that are God's" than the East, which preferred St. Paul's injunction that "the powers that be are ordained of God." Even more fundamentally, Greek theologians saw the Christian promise of salvation fulfilled by the Resurrection and stressed that the Kingdom of God might already be accessible to the believer—"we all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory"—while their Western counterparts, still awaiting the ultimate perfection of Christ's second coming, preferred the less ecstatic formulation of St. Paul's words, "For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face." In the more narrowly ecclesiastical sphere, the Greeks never altered their belief, supported by numerous passages from the Acts of the Apostles, that the final authority in doctrinal matters lay in the church assembled in council, whereas Rome soon moved to the claim that this authority had been vested solely in the successors of St. Peter. These divergent interpretations had a profound effect on the political thinking of their societies and on the complicated relations of the church and the state. Papal infallibility was unacceptable to Eastern theologians. On the other hand, if the heavenly kingdom was truly at hand, and Christ already ruling as king, the emperor might understandably be acknowledged as his colleague and image. If this event was still essentially in the future, such a belief became untenable, and Western fathers would ultimately always reach the position that the ruler was a sinful mortal subject to ecclesiastical strictures.

This latent antagonism between the two halves of the Christian empire was intensified by a number of circumstances even before the accession of Heraclius. At the human level, a linguistic wedge was driven between the two ends of the Mediterranean. The common language of the East had

always been Greek, as that of the West was Latin, but from the second century B.C. the educated classes and all officialdom had been completely bilingual. Justinian's *Code* was still promulgated in Latin in the mid-sixth century, even though Greek was preferred for current legislation. By the end of the century, however, Pope Gregory I admitted that he knew no Greek, and within a generation the two halves of the former empire were incapable of understanding each other. Greek intellectuals sneered at the "barbarian" speech of the West, and even where contempt did not inject additional obstacles, all relations perforce passed through the distorting mirror of translation.

On purely physical grounds, communications were also impaired by the continuous migration of Slavic tribes into imperial territory. The ultimate source of difficulties lay in distant Central Asia, where the internecine struggle of various Turco-Mongol tribes hurled a number of them in successive waves toward the West during the first millennium of the Christian era, but the absence of a hermetic geographical barrier in the East left Europe open to these nomad invasions ranging unchecked across Transcaspia and the steppes of southern Russia all the way to the Hungarian plain. Thus, events occurring far beyond the ken of "European" powers repeatedly upset their political calculations. The advance of the Huns in the fourth century, driving the Goths across the Danube, heralded the barbarization of the West and simultaneously helped their Iranian allies, the Alans and Sarmatians, to overrun the Slavic tribes scattered between the Elbe and the Dnieper. In the sixth century, the Avars crossed the lower Volga, smashed the Turkic empire of the Bulgars east of the Sea of Azov, briefly threatened Constantinople together with the Persians, and finally settled at the end of the traditional invasion route in Hungary, until Charlemagne annihilated them in 796. Although their siege of the capital proved ineffectual, the Avar invasion was critical for the empire because of its intensification of the southern movement of the Slavs. Crossing the Danube as early as 517, the Slavs reached the Peloponnese by 578. Instead of keeping to the hit-and-run pattern of their nomad predecessors, they began to settle in the lands which they had overrun. The emperor Maurice temporarily checked their advance, but they profited from the neglect of the Danube frontier when war broke out with Persia after Maurice's murder in 602. Hence, at the beginning of the seventh century, the Balkans and much of Greece were all but completely Slavicized, and the great imperial highway through the Balkans, the Via Egnatia linking Thessalonike with the region of Venice, became to all purposes inaccessible.

The loose tribal pattern of the Slavic confederations was insufficiently advanced to form a homogeneous state, but cohesion was provided by the next Turkic group, the Bulgars. Unable to withstand the pressure of the

Khazars advancing westward toward the northern Caucasus and the Crimea, the Bulgar khan, Asperuch, reached the Danube by 679. His successors exploited the difficulties attending the downfall of the Heraclid dynasty to entrench themselves in their new home, where they fused the Slavic tribes, whose language and customs they appropriated, into a unified state constituting a permanent threat on the northwest frontier of the empire. For some two centuries thereafter, the great classical and early Christian centers of the Balkans, Athens, Corinth, Thebes, Salona, lost all contact with the world of which they had been an integral part. Illyricum, as the area was then called, had been politically tied to the East while simultaneously recognizing the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Rome. As such it had provided a meeting point for Greek and Latin traditions. Now, reduced to a vacuum and a no-man's-land, it eventually emerged no longer a bridge between the two imperial cultures but a bone of contention destined to envenom negotiations between Constantinople and Rome.

The necessity of defending both the Euphrates against the Persians and the Danube against the Avars, Slavs, and Bulgars probably accelerated the transformation of the outwardly civilian pattern of the classical Roman Empire into an openly military administration. The origin of the new provincial system based on *themes*, or military districts, governed by generals with civilian as well as military authority and defended by locally recruited troops, is still disputed. Some of its aspects may well go back to the extraordinary commands created by Justinian and Maurice in the sixth century, but the earliest identifiable *themes* seemingly date from the period of the Heraclian dynasty, and as such must in some way be associated with the imperial crisis of the seventh century.

The most serious element of this crisis was undoubtedly the unforeseen and overwhelming expansion of the Arabs, which swamped the Persian realm and wiped imperial rule from Africa, Palestine, Syria, and Armenia. The Arabs had long been familiar to the empire as minor border nuisances, or as allies against Persia, but no portent had heralded the explosion of their power in the decades following the death of the prophet Muhammad in 632. To be sure, some of the seeds of the disaster may have been planted much earlier. Native resentment against the dominant Greek culture which had overshadowed their older traditions had burst forth periodically in the East since the days of Alexander the Great. The Roman Empire, and subsequently official Christianity represented by the same emperor, fell heir to this smoldering hatred. For all of the hypothetical "exhaustion" of Byzantium and Persia, or the "fanaticism" of the Arabs, it remains difficult to explain the Muslim blitzkrieg, and particularly the rapid capitulation of such formidable fortress-cities as Alexandria, Damascus, or Ctesiphon to small, poorly equipped Arab detachments, untrained in siege

warfare, and facing sophisticated fortifications and highly skilled professional armies, unless we postulate some degree of fifth-column activity on the part of disaffected native religious minorities, such as the Jews, and particularly the Monophysites, whom Justinian's legislation had reduced to second-class citizenship. Whatever their causes, however, the Arab victories revolutionized the history of Europe probably to a greater degree than the earlier Germanic invasions.

Although the Byzantine fleets armed from the middle of the seventh century with the "secret weapon" of Greek fire, which induced uncontrollable panic among the enemy, kept the mastery over the sea until the beginning of the ninth century, the empire found itself perpetually on the defensive in the East. Indeed, until the emperor Leo III lifted the siege of Constantinople in 717, Byzantium fought for its very life. Its richest provinces, its sources of food and manpower, its commercial and industrial centers, spared by earlier disasters, were now lost beyond recall. Consequently, the militarization of the state grew apace, the imperial economy had to be refocused on Asia Minor and the capital, and the empire, with no resources to spare, turned its attention resolutely away from the West. All the appeals of Rome and northern Italy, threatened by the Lombard advance, all Western objection to the dogmatic concessions by which the Heraclian dynasty attempted to pacify the Monophysite provinces lying in the Arab path, fell on deaf or helpless ears. As a result, Rome, its protests and needs disregarded, gradually saw less and less reason to keep faith with a distant and neglectful master and sought new protectors among the nearby Frankish rulers.

Within the ecclesiastical community, the new situation heralded a serious alteration in the existing balance of power. The Muslim domination of Alexandria, Antioch, and Jerusalem left the Patriarch of Constantinople sole head of the Eastern church in much the same way as the pope in Rome had always been the supreme authority in the West. This new status could not fail to increase his pretensions, and the patriarch reaffirmed his "Ecumenical" title, first assumed in 587. Whatever the true implications of this ambiguous term, it unquestionably scandalized and offended the papacy, and embittered the relations between the two sees. The rejection by Rome of the decrees of the Constantinopolitan Council of 692, which dealt primarily with matters of discipline and custom, underscored the fact that the divergences between the two churches were reaching down to the minutiae of everyday practices. In the capital itself, however, the new solitary status of the patriarch left him bereft of all effective support against the overwhelming power of the emperor.

The growth of imperial authority in this period is one of its most interesting aspects. There is no doubt that this power had long existed; in a

sense the emperor was still the Roman autocrat who had merely transferred his divinity from his person to his office. Still functioning to all intents as *Pontifex Maximus*, the ruler had appointed bishops, summoned and presided over church councils, and promulgated their decisions as imperial decrees. Constantine I's burial in the Church of the Holy Apostles, surrounded by the effigies of his twelve colleagues, left little doubt as to his own estimate of his position. Yet the apostles had been ordinary mortals, and imperial supervision of church affairs, however extensive, did not permit the emperor to interfere in matters of doctrine. With the opening years of the seventh century, the empire began to take an increasingly religious aspect, and the new imperial title of *Basileus*, or king, replacing the earlier Latin terminology, had unmistakably supernatural connotations. The ship which bore Heraclius to the throne in 610 was protected by an icon of the Virgin. His great campaigns to avenge the theft of the True Cross from Jerusalem by the Persians took on the aspects of a crusade the church melted down its treasures to equip the imperial army, Heraclius hailed his fallen soldiers as martyrs, the Persian shrine at Ganzak in Azerbaijan was destroyed in retaliation for the sack of Jerusalem, and the emperor personally carried the relics of Christianity back to the holy city. Imperial art lingered significantly over the haloed figure of the young David, "the Lord's anointed," and the cross and bust of Christ replaced classic victories on the imperial coins, whose legends proclaimed the piety and orthodoxy of the rulers.

Far more seriously, Heraclius and his descendants bypassed canonical channels in their attempts to find dogmatic formulas acceptable to both orthodox and schismatic. Instead of awaiting a conciliar decision, as the Eastern tradition demanded, the emperors often promulgated new doctrines on their own initiative and in their own name. Since these formulas defined the operation of Christ's will or energy, they concerned directly the doctrine of His nature. Thus the emperors overstepped the bounds of mere supervision and intruded into the realm of dogma. Many of these innovations, including the assumption of the new imperial title, antedate the rise of Islam and cannot, therefore, be attributed to its influence. Yet the presence over the border of a major power in which church and state were indistinguishable, and whose caliph wielded authority as the direct successor of God's prophet rather than as an earthly ruler, cannot have been entirely without effect. In his desperate struggle to save Christendom from the might of Islam, the emperor was forced to match every one of its aspects, and as such, to take on some of the spiritual traits of the "Commander of the Faithful." The result was to make Byzantium a middle ground between Muslim theocracy and the increasing separation of church and state which was to characterize the West.

From the earliest manifestation of the danger to the empire in the East, its most urgent concern was to save the capital from the repeated attacks of the Arabs, and to salvage whatever territory might still be held in Asia Minor. The successors of Heraclius bent all their energies to this task, and his last descendant, Justinian II (685–695, 707–711), even sought the alliance of the barbarian khan of the Khazars, whose strategic position in southeastern Russia permitted him to attack the Arabs from the rear. Despite their efforts and compromises, the emperors found themselves repeatedly at bay, facing at once foreign onslaught and internal discontent. So desperate was the situation in 661 that Heraclius' grandson, Constans II, even fled Constantinople to seek shelter in Italy, incidentally demonstrating that the imperial abandonment of the West was still more a matter of necessity than deliberate policy.

The task of bringing some stability out of the disaster was left to the first Oriental dynasty on the imperial throne, the Isaurians, natives of the distant mountains of southeastern Anatolia. The first Isaurians, Leo III and Constantine V, were remarkable generals with an exalted concept of their duties. To Leo III belongs the glory of hurling the Arab armies back from the walls of Constantinople in 717, thus marking the first definitive check of Muslim power some fifteen years before Charles Martel's victory at Poitiers set the high-water mark for Arab expansion in the West. Constantine V, benefiting from the internal troubles of the caliphate attendant upon the overthrow of the Umayyad dynasty in 750 and the removal of the Muslim capital from Damascus to more distant Baghdad, reestablished imperial control over most of the crucial economic and recruiting territory of Asia Minor. At the same time he halted the advance of the Bulgars at Anchialus in 763 and consolidated the Balkan frontier with a system of fortifications and with transported Syrian and Armenian settlers.

In the civilian realm, the Isaurians likewise concerned themselves with the welfare of their subjects. Following the pattern of their predecessors, they associated their sons to the throne to avoid the danger of civil war in cases of disputed successions. The pattern of the *themes* was extended throughout the empire, the fiscal system overhauled, the heads of the bureaucracy linked more closely with the imperial palace. Great functionaries such as the Praetorian Prefects or the Masters of the Army of the late Roman period, whose power might overshadow that of the emperor, disappeared together with their Latin titles from the imperial rosters, and were replaced by men with more circumscribed jurisdictions. A briefer legal code, the *Ecloga*, replaced for many practical purposes the unwieldy bulk of Justinian's great *Corpus*. Abandoning the ecumenical scope and classical tradition of the Justinianic legislation, the *Ecloga* also marked a new stage in the evolution of a new Christian society. The paramount



authority of the Roman paterfamilias was sharply limited by the recognition of numerous rights to women and children. Marriage ceased to be a dissolvable human contract and became an irrevocable sacrament. In the criminal sphere, numerous mutilations, of which the favorite was blinding, gave an Oriental cast to the new Code, though in many cases these provisions, so distasteful to modern sensibilities, reflected the concern of Christian legislators, since they replaced the death penalty, thus giving to the criminal an opportunity to repent his misdeeds.

The all-inclusive powers assumed by Leo and Constantine provoked the violent confrontation between the state and the church known as the Iconoclastic Controversy, which embittered the whole Isaurian period as well as much of the next century. In the preface to the *Ecloga* Leo III had summed up his duties in terms of a divine mandate:

Since God has put in our hands the imperial authority, according to His good pleasure . . . —bidding us after the manner of Peter, the head and chief of the Apostles, to feed his most faithful flock—we believe that there is nothing higher or greater that we can do in return than to govern in judgment and justice those who are committed by Him to our care.

The emperor may even have gone so far as to claim that he was both "king and priest." Such claims might rise logically from the growing spiritualization of the imperial authority, and they were not incompatible with the concept of the emperor as the equal of the apostles, but they could not pass unchallenged in the deeply religious society of the eighth century. Obviously unacceptable to St. Peter's other successor in Rome, they likewise drove the usually docile Eastern Church into rebellion.

The immediate subject of the dispute concerned the reverence due to religious images, or icons, but the ultimate implications reached to the very bases of theology and political theory. Earlier scholars often traced Leo III's aversion to icons to his Oriental background and to Islamic influences, a thesis reinforced by the accusations of ecclesiastical writers. More recently, however, it has been observed that the opposition to images originated within the church rather than with the emperor, and that archaeological discoveries, in the Umayyad desert palaces in particular, show that Muslim iconoclasm primarily characterized the puritanical Abbasid dynasty coming to power some twenty years after Leo's first iconoclastic decree. Whatever the immediate circumstances, an iconoclastic tradition was also deeply ingrained in the Christian heritage, the second commandment against the making of graven images was difficult to disregard.

In their defense of icons, their Iconodule partisans argued that the Decalogue had been intended for the Jews and that its precepts had been radically affected by the coming of Christ. The most distinguished theologian of the party, St John of Damascus, went on to formulate the basic argument that the rejection of Christ's icons was in essence a rejection of the very core of Christianity, the doctrine of his incarnation: "If you do not worship the image neither do you cherish the Son of God who is the living image of the invisible God . . . I worship the image of Christ as God incarnate," a position reaffirmed a century later by the patriarch Photius "He who denies that Christ can be painted, denies Him to have been born a man, and he who does not adore His image, clearly does not adore Him either." On both sides the arguments, far from dealing with reason or superstition, rested on fundamental points of doctrine. Under the circumstances, imperial decrees forbidding the worship of icons became religious rather than political pronouncements directly affecting the daily lives of all men, and projected the controversy far beyond the closed circle of intellectual disputations into smoldering or open civil war.

The century-long struggle, which outlived the Isaurian dynasty, may at first seem inconclusive for all of its repercussions. The initial period of Iconoclasm inaugurated by Leo III came to an end in the third generation during the reign of the empress Irene, who did not hesitate to have her son Constantine VI blinded to maintain herself in power. At the Second Coun-

cil of Nicaea (787) presided over by her appointee, the patriarch Tarasius, the Iconoclastic doctrine was condemned. Irene's shocking coup d'état soon provoked a violent reaction which drove her from the throne and ended the dynasty, but the second period of Iconoclasm sponsored by the emperors Leo V, Michael II, and his son Theophilus ended in the ultimate victory of the Iconodules at the Council of Orthodoxy in 843. Nevertheless, the internal upheavals of the empire seriously compromised its international position, and the achievements of the early Isaurians were partly undone. The armies of the great Abbasid caliph Harun al-Rashid once again reached the neighborhood of Constantinople early in the ninth century, and civil war convulsed the eastern provinces after the murder of Leo V in 820. In the Balkans, the initial victories of Irene's successor, Nicephorus I, against the Slavs in Greece were more than offset by the disaster of 811, in which the emperor himself fell in battle before the reconstituted power of the Bulgars. Only the seemingly providential death of their khan, Krum, before the walls of Constantinople saved the besieged capital two years later.

The alienation of Italy grew apace. One of the by-products of the Arab conquest of Egypt and Palestine had been a massive flight of the orthodox Christian population toward southern Italy, which was largely re-Hellenized in the course of the seventh century. Early in the next century, Iconodule refugees, seeking asylum in Rome, pushed Pope Gregory III to condemn Leo III's innovations and his meddling in doctrinal affairs. The emperor's retaliatory transfer of Illyricum from the papal jurisdiction to that of the patriarch of Constantinople envenomed relations still further, and Rome drew closer to the Franks. Half a century later, the usurpation of Irene provided both the papacy and Charlemagne with an excuse for the coronation of a new emperor at Rome on Christmas day 800.

The international position of the emperor had been temporarily compromised by these developments, but within the empire, the Council of Orthodoxy proved but a Pyrrhic victory for the church. One of the crucial aspects of the controversy had been the *Basileus'* tampering with the faith. As St. John of Damascus had firmly stressed:

It appertains not to kings to make laws for the Church. Kings have not preached the word to you, but apostles and prophets . . . Political welfare is the concern of kings: the ecclesiastical system is a matter for pastors and doctors; and this, brethren, is an act of brigandage.

Yet throughout the controversy, religious doctrine had invariably reflected the imperial will: inaugurated by Leo III and Constantine V, Iconoclasm had later been reestablished by Leo V and his successors, its first check was due to Irene's personal devotion to the cause of images, and the final

victory of Orthodoxy was brought about by the empress-regent Theodora II. In their challenge of ecclesiastical authority, the emperors had emerged victorious. Thereafter, powerful patriarchs might occasionally exploit moments of imperial weakness, but by the middle of the ninth century the imperial apotheosis had been achieved. Post-Iconoclastic art presenting the haloed figures of the imperial consorts crowned by Christ and sharing with him a spaceless-timeless eternity underscored the victory. This confirmation of the newly achieved imperial status had far-reaching consequences. It blocked the possibility of Byzantine compromises with the upstart Germanic emperors and spread among the soon-to-be-converted Slavs the concept of the supreme rights of the imperial autocrat as head of the Orthodox church.

Even the seriousness of the international crisis may have been overstressed by later historians eager to blacken the reputation of Theophilus' son Michael III in order to justify his murder in 867 by the usurper Basil I, the Macedonian. The most serious reversals of the ninth century occurred at sea, where the neglect of the imperial navy, implicated in earlier seditions, led to the seizure of Sicily and Crete by Arab expeditionary forces from North Africa. The control of the sea lanes slipped temporarily from Byzantine hands. Far to the north, the spreading activity of the Vikings stretched constantly outward. In successive years, their expeditions struck Constantinople both from the Mediterranean and across the Black Sea from the new Scandinavian bases in Russia. Nevertheless, the empire successfully weathered these storms. Both Scandinavian attacks against the city were repulsed, and the imperial fleet, though unable to retake the lost islands from the Arabs, conducted successful raids on the Egyptian coast and reappeared in Dalmatia. On land, the Muslim capture of Amorium, the homeland of the reigning dynasty, in 838, was balanced by the renewal of the Khazar alliance and the great imperial victory of Poson in 863 which reestablished Byzantine domination over most of Asia Minor.

The vitality of the empire gradually emerging from the Muslim and Iconoclastic crises is perhaps best illustrated by its intellectual effervescence. The fostering of culture and the support of education had always been an imperial concern. The University of Constantinople had first been reorganized by Theodosius II in 425, but had fallen on hard times in the seventh century and perhaps even been closed in 726. Re-created by Michael III's uncle, the Caesar Bardas, and fostered by Bardas' rival, Theoctistus, the empress' favorite adviser, it soon became once more a brilliant cultural center closely linked with the imperial court. Far from being a theological school of the type later found in the West, the imperial university was a training school for the civil service. It had faculties of law and medicine as well as philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, and rhetoric.

The fame of its first director, Leo the Mathematician, was so widespread that the caliph vainly sought to entice him to Baghdad, and Muslim as well as Christian students flocked to his lectures. Equally distinguished was his colleague Photius, soon to be head of the imperial chancellery and patriarch, whose surviving notes are one of our best sources of information on lost classical works.

One of the most far-reaching triumphs of the young university intellectuals was the spread of the imperial culture and faith beyond the limits of the state. When the Russian attack of 860 made the renewal of the Khazar alliance imperative, the man chosen for this delicate mission was the most distinguished linguist among Photius' students, Cyril of Thessalonike, better known as Constantine. The activity of Cyril and his older brother Methodius bore even greater fruit in the West. Traveling in 863 to the court of the new Slavic principality of Great Moravia, the brothers brought with them not only the requested Christian Scriptures, but also a translation of the liturgy into the Slavic language, for which Cyril's linguistic talent had devised an alphabet. The following year, the ruler of the Bulgars likewise entered the Christian community, receiving baptism from a Greek bishop and changing his pagan name from Boris to Michael in honor of his imperial godfather. The work of Cyril and Methodius eventually proved transitory in Moravia, and even the Byzantine aspect of Bulgarian Christianity was temporarily compromised, but the foundation had been laid for the permanent cultural protectorate of the empire over Slavic eastern Europe.

One of the most dramatic aspects of the imperial revival in the ninth century was a violent clash with Rome. the Photian schism. In Constantinople the accession of the moderate and learned Photius to the patriarchal throne in 857, and the abdication of his intransigent predecessor Ignatius was an episode in the aftermath of Iconoclasm. In the ecclesiastical sphere, the problem raised was that of conciliar competence in the deposition of a patriarch. To the Eastern church, the conciliar decision was sufficient and final, but Pope Nicholas I maintained that only he had final jurisdiction in a matter of such importance. Engaged as he was in asserting his supreme authority over Western rulers and ecclesiastical dignitaries, Nicholas could not accept the designation of a patriarch, which for all of its traditional precedents was patently uncanonical, while the emperor could tolerate no interference with his prerogatives. The Isaurian adjudication of Illyricum to Constantinople still rankled at Rome, and the entire problem was reopened by the conversion of Bulgaria. The quarrel dragged on for some twenty years, beyond the life spans of both emperor and pope. Photius was excommunicated, deposed, and rehabilitated, Boris-Michael, making the most of the ambiguous status of Illyricum, equivo-

cated, intrigued, and blackmailed to achieve the autonomy of the Bulgarian church. But, in the long run, the victory lay with the empire. Nicholas I's successor, John VIII, recognized the legitimacy of Photius' position, tacitly overlooking his uncanonical appointment, and subsequent popes, embroiled in the Roman crises of the ninth and tenth centuries, were in no position to challenge imperial prerogatives. Bulgaria remained within the spiritual and cultural sphere of Constantinople.

The schism itself, though boding ill for the future, reflects the survival of considerable Christian unity in this period. For all the acrimony of their messages, ambassadors and papal legates hastened unimpeded back and forth across the Mediterranean; diplomatic relations were maintained; the controversy ended in reconciliation and the renewal of communion between the two churches. Even in the midst of the difficulties, Cyril and Methodius' mission to Moravia, sponsored by Photius, received the blessing of Nicholas I. The breach between the East and the West was far from complete.

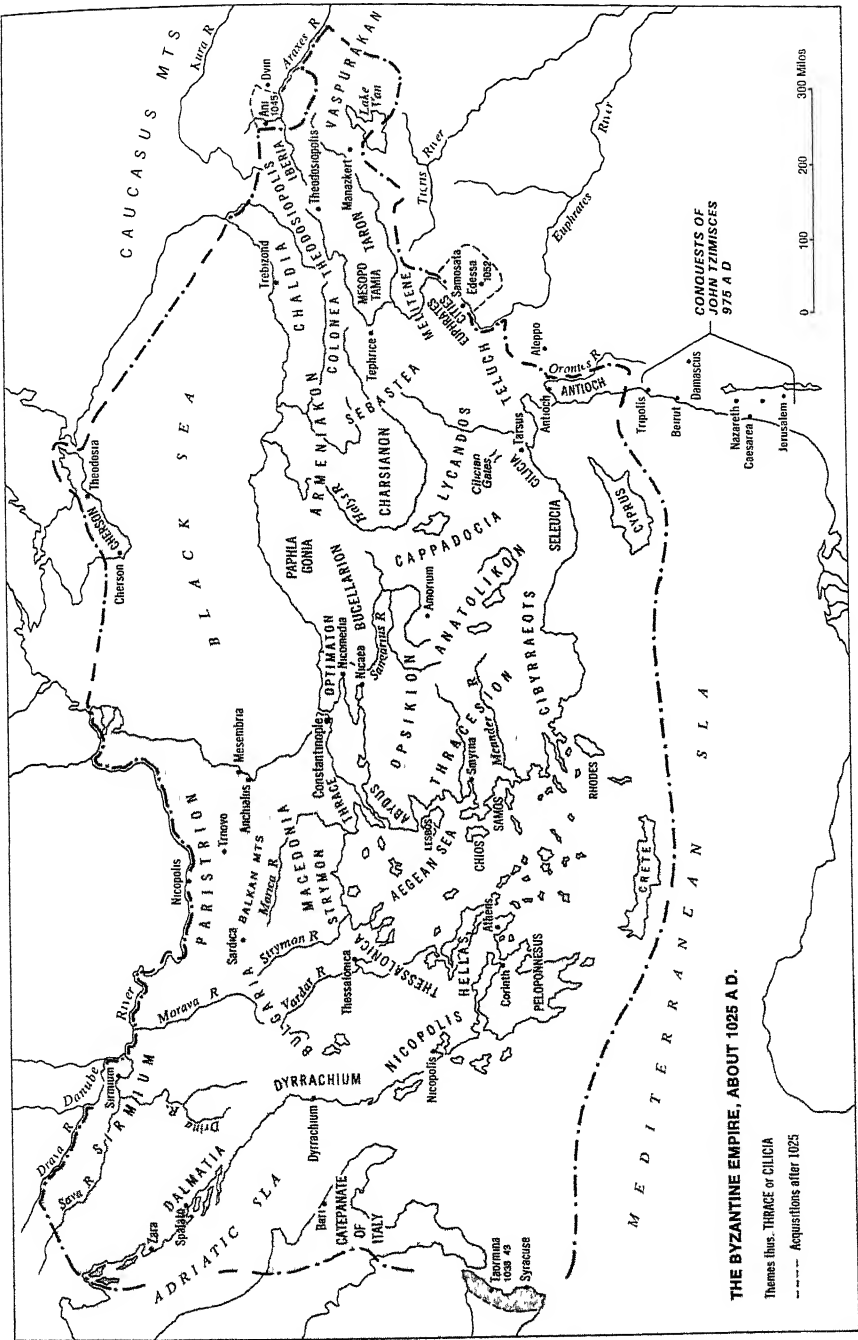
37 Later Byzantium

The imperial recovery initiated by the Amorians came to full flower with the reconstitution of the ecumenical empire by their successors the Macedonian emperors, who maintained themselves on the throne from 867 to 1056. The most immediate achievement of the new dynasty lay in the rapid expansion of the imperial frontiers. In the East, following the earlier victory of Poson, the Byzantine armies passed to the offensive, making the most of the fragmentation of the declining Abbasid caliphate. Recapturing the strategic pass of the Cilician gates controlling the access to Syria as early as 876, and crossing the Euphrates near Malatya in 931, the emperors pushed the attack along the entire border. The Syrian cities of Edessa, Aleppo, Antioch, Tiberias, Nazareth, and Damascus fell one by one, and in 975 the armies of the co-emperor John I Tzimiskes reached the suburbs of Baghdad and possibly the vicinity of Jerusalem. The Transcaucasian campaigns of Basil II after 1000 rounded out the northeastern frontier with Armenian and Georgian territories. In the Balkans, the initial success of the Bulgars at the beginning of the tenth century, when their czar Symeon, following the example of his predecessor Krum, had besieged Constantinople, soon met with reverses. Symeon's son, Czar Peter, settled for a sonorous title and a secondhand imperial bride. But the final solution

A.D.	867–1056	Macedonian dynasty
	876	Byzantine recapture of the Cilician gates; beginning of Byzantine reconquest of southern Italy
	926	Second Bulgar siege of Constantinople
	931	Beginning of Byzantine reconquest of Syria
	944–959	Reign of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus
	965	Byzantium retakes Crete and Cyprus
	975	John I Tzimiskes reconquers Syria and Palestine
	976–1025	Reign of Basil II
	1000	Basil II's campaign in Transcaucasia
	1014	Basil II's annihilation of the First Bulgarian Empire
	1041	Start of Norman conquest of southern Italy
	1054	Great Schism between Rome and Constantinople
	1071	Seljuk defeat of Byzantium at Manzikert
	1081–1185	Comnenian dynasty
	1082	Grant of commercial privileges to Venice
	1097	Arrival of the First Crusade at Constantinople
	1143–1180	Reign of Manuel I
	1159	Manuel I's entrance into Antioch
	1176	Byzantine defeat at Myriokephalon
	1182	Massacre of the Latins at Constantinople
	1185–1204	Angeli dynasty
	1204	Sack of Constantinople by the Latins
	1204–1261	Latin Empire of Constantinople; Lascarid dynasty at Nicaea
	1205	Defeat of the Latin empire by the Bulgars
	1230	Defeat of Epirus at Klokotnica
	1259	Michael VIII's defeat of the Latins at Pelagonia
	1261	Michael VIII retakes Constantinople
	1261–1453	Paleologue dynasty
	1274	Union of Lyons
	1282	Death of Michael VIII
	1304	Revolt of the Catalan mercenaries
	1346	Coronation of Stephen Dušan as Czar of Serbia
	1365	Ottoman capital shifted to Andrinople in Thrace
	1369	Journey of John V Paleologus to the West
	1389	Ottoman victory at Kosovo
	1396	Failure of the Crusade of Nicopolis
	1399–1400	Journey of Manuel II Paleologus to the West
	1438–1439	Council of Union at Florence
	1444	Failure of the Crusade of Varna
	1453	Ottomans capture Constantinople

was to come with Basil II, remembered by posterity under the ominous title Killer of the Bulgars. Abandoning the compromise peace of the preceding centuries, Basil attacked in the West as well as in the East, provoked by the belligerent attitude of the new Bulgarian czar Samuel. The final annihilation of the Bulgarian army in 1014 and the death of Samuel from shock at the sight of the blinded remnants of his troops sent back by Basil II marked the end of the First Bulgarian Empire. Its lands reverted to the empire in the form of ordinary *themes*, its autonomous ecclesiastical organization was reabsorbed into the fabric of the patriarchate of Constantinople. Farther afield, the Byzantine navy finally swept the Arabs from Cyprus and Crete by 965. The strategic port of Bari, throwing off its Carolingian allegiance, had long since opened its gates to an imperial army which went on to reconquer much of southern Italy. Once again the empire stretched from Palestine to the Adriatic, which was controlled on its Dalmatian as well as its Italian side through the overlordship of Venice. The imperial territory was now closer to that of Justinian's heyday than to the shrunken possession of the Heraclians and Isaurians.

Force of arms always proved the decisive factor in the imperial reconquest, but military victory was invariably prepared by the intricate workings of the highly sophisticated imperial diplomacy. In his book *On the Administration of the Empire*, destined for the edification of his heir, Basil I's grandson Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus expounded the arcana of imperial policy. The enemy was to be neutralized through alliances with his opponents, pacified with gifts, drawn into the imperial sphere of influence, and finally annihilated. This blueprint was systematically put into effect. The Bulgars were first immobilized by an imperial alliance with their neighbors the Croats. Next, Czar Peter received the title of *Basileus* and became the emperor's son-in-law. Then came the ruthless final settlement of the "Bulgarian question" by Basil II. In similar fashion, Constantinople recognized Ashot I of Armenia as king and addressed him as "son," before swallowing most of the territory of Armenia in the eleventh century. Negotiations with the Petchenegs of the Ukrainian steppes neutralized the danger of Russian raids, since the Petchenegs could lie in wait for returning raiders at the vulnerable portage of the Dnieper rapids. The death of the Kievan prince Sviatoslav, killed in ambush in 972 at the very point designated by Constantine VII, testifies to the effectiveness of the imperial military intelligence. The second stage of imperial policy was reached with the Christianization of Russia under Vladimir I in 989, which drew the country still closer to the orbit of Constantinople. Elaborate diplomatic relations were also maintained with the caliphate, as the presence of a mosque and an official styled "Consul of the Arabs" at the imperial court reveal.



The eminent success of the Macedonian emperors resulted in a large measure from the stability of the dynasty, which made possible a long-term and consistent policy. A remarkable allegiance developed between the people and the legitimate imperial line, and the Macedonian emperors adopted the shrewd tactic of associated outstanding military figures to the throne as co-emperors or tutor-emperors. By enlisting such distinguished personalities as the admiral Romanus Lecapenus and the great generals Nicephorus II Phocas and John I Tzimiskes, the legitimate rulers offset their own shortcomings while preventing these able men from undertaking seditious enterprises. At the same time the Macedonians came close to achieving a true dynastic principle while remaining ostensibly within the Roman constitutional framework which made of the emperor an elected magistrate. The legal fiction was maintained as before: the successive emperors were formally acclaimed and crowned, but the belief that the only true emperor was a *porphyrogenitus*, a son of the reigning monarch born in the *porphyra*, or purple chamber of the palace, entrenched itself in the popular mind. Neither the youth nor the illegitimate birth of the sickly Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus, nor the minority of Basil II and his brother Constantine VIII, nor even the ludicrous vagaries of the foolish old women who closed the Macedonian line, could break the passionate allegiance of the people to the dynasty. The sons of Romanus Lecapenus, the great magnates of Basil II's early reign, and the adopted son of the elderly empress Zoë all learned at their expense the popular belief that God himself watched over the Macedonian house. The succession was not effectively challenged so long as a single member of the family could be found.

Both the legitimate members of the dynasty and their coopted colleagues maintained high ideals of public service. Despite the growth of the bureaucracy necessitated by the expansion of the empire, no aspect of the life of his subjects lay beyond the attentive supervision of the ruler. The scholarly Constantine VII informs us of every minutia of imperial ceremonies and of the functioning of the *theme* system; the new general codification of the *Basilics* matched in size and inclusiveness the *Code* of Justinian. Our best mirror for the paternal if close regimentation of daily life is found in the manual of city administration called the *Book of the Prefect*. Not the church but the state maintained hospitals, orphanages, and asylums; imperial monopolies determined the types, standards, and prices for every type of silk and brocades; even in the other sectors of the guided economy, wages, prices, and workmanship were closely supervised. Legislation protected native artisans and merchants from foreign competition, but also took measures against unfair domestic practices, profiteering middlemen, price fixing, and the dumping of goods. Taxes were constantly watched and abuses severely punished. With unexpected realism for the

Middle Ages, the law acknowledged that interest on loans was usury and a sin in the eyes of the church, but that the welfare of the citizens was best served by the recognition of the practice and the regulation of its rates. The activities of foreign merchants were strictly overseen: they were restricted to specific residential quarters outside the walls, forbidden to settle permanently even there, allowed to enter into the city only in small unarmed groups watched over by an imperial official, forced to sell at fixed prices, and forbidden to export certain items. The balance of international trade solidly favored the empire, and Constantinople was its center.

Within the city walls, urban planning preserved the seemingly appearance of the capital from individual fantasies:

. . . we decree that no one may erect [protruding balconies or solaria] unless they be separated by a distance of ten feet from that of the neighbors. Similarly if anyone wishing to alter the roof of his house should cover it with marble slabs, he shall not be allowed to carry out this alteration until he remove to the above mentioned ten foot interval from the neighboring buildings.

Nor did the countryside escape the all-seeing eye of the emperor. To prevent extortion or collusion with local magnates, governors of *themes* were forbidden to own land within their jurisdiction or receive gifts during their term of office; neither they nor any member of their family might marry within the district. Imperial legislation repeatedly protected the rights of soldier-farmers to their land as long as they performed their military duties. The free farmer communities were sedulously guarded against the pressure of wealthy or powerful neighbors: land within the community had to be offered for sale first to relatives or co-owners, then to immediate neighbors, then to other members of the community, and only failing all these to outsiders. Men might not buy land from persons outside their social class; specifically the *dunatoi*, or mighty, could not acquire the lands of the poor. A soldier's land alienated for whatever reason, especially debt, was subject to a thirty-year moratorium; if illegally acquired, it reverted to the original owner with all its improvements, and the buyer was not indemnified. Finally the community was jointly responsible for the taxes of its members. These regulations clearly left little margin for private initiative, but they testify to the constant responsibility of the state toward its citizens.

The wealth of the empire, drawn from commerce and conquest, manifested itself in the splendor of its buildings, which dazzled foreign visitors in the capital and in the whole of the imperial territory. In Constantinople, the *Book of Ceremonies* celebrated the magnificence of imperial protocol, and the monarchs repaired the damaged dome of Hagia Sophia, restoring it to its former splendor, extended the palace, and built new churches. From

the Euphrates to Italy, great buildings and collections of illuminated manuscripts still reflect the extent of the "Macedonian renaissance" whose influence may even have reached Muslim Spain.

Culture was indispensable for any successful career. Except for the bluff Basil II, the emperors personally led the way and continued to favor intellectuals. Leo VI the Wise, the student of the learned Photius, was an excellent rhetorician, his son Constantine VII turned the imperial palace into a meeting place for scholars and literati. University graduates continued to fill the upper reaches of the civil service, and even middle-class women, such as the mother of the scholar-diplomat Michael Psellus, were sufficiently literate to supervise the homework of their sons. The only recognized aristocracy was one of administrative office and court dignity, not birth or wealth, and uneducated boors, whatever their social background, were subjects for derision and contempt.

So much brilliance attracted the admiration, envious and ill-willed though it might be, of contemporaries. Macedonian Constantinople, with a population approaching the million mark, ten times that of most contemporary Western capitals, was the cynosure of all eyes. Muslims, Jews, and Christians, Syrians, Armenians, Greeks, Russians, Bulgars, Italians, Germans, Normans, and Anglo-Saxons rubbed shoulders in the capital, vying for advancement and favors. Russian tribesmen, whose first focus had been the caliphate, now shifted their sights toward Tsargrad, the imperial city, first as raiders and pirates, later as treaty merchants, spiritual sons, and members of the famed imperial Varangian guard. Bulgar and Russian princes, and even the Western emperor Otto I intrigued to obtain imperial brides and to associate themselves with the ruling dynasty. The manifest antagonism of Otto's ambassador, Bishop Liutprand of Cremona, cannot disguise his grudging admiration. Liutprand's entire report of his unsuccessful mission was a willful distortion and reads like a parody of the complaints of latter-day tourists: the food was garlicky and bad, the natives rude, buildings drafty, drinking water almost unobtainable, and customs officials unreasonable. But not even he could remain unmoved at the sight of the emperor seated on the great throne flanked by bronze lions and gilt trees filled with birds. At the ambassador's approach the lions roared, the birds sang, and the throne was raised aloft by invisible means. With unconscious candor Liutprand admits that ". . . when the lions roared and the birds sang each according to its own species at my entrance, I experienced no terror and felt no admiration because I had been thoroughly warned about these things by those who knew them well." The unwarned Russian ambassadors thought themselves in heaven.

In the eyes of the world, and most of all in its own, Byzantium seemed at its zenith, and its greatest danger probably stemmed from the com-

placency and arrogance with which the imperial authorities viewed their exalted state. The ultimate purpose of Constantine VII's advice to his son was "that the nations may bring thee their gifts and thou mayest be adored of them that dwell upon the earth." The emperor insisted that no foreigner was worthy of entering the imperial house and stressed the fact that the princess Maria Lecapena granted to Peter of Bulgaria was not a *porphyrogenita*. The same would be said of Otto II's bride, Theophano. The full imperial princess Anna was granted to a Russian bridegroom only under the double stress of civil war and threatened invasion.

Similarly, the Byzantine chancellery recognized the existence of other imperial titles only in moments of direst crisis. The ambassadors of Michael I might greet Charlemagne as *Basileus* at the moment when the Bulgars were at the gates of Constantinople, and Michael II write to Louis I as "my imperial brother" in 824 while civil war was raging in the East, but hardly had Byzantine armies retaken Bari in 876 than Basil I accused his Carolingian counterpart of usurping the imperial title. Liutprand of Cremona was curtly reminded that the only emperor of the Romans resided in Constantinople and that his master, "the King of the Germans," had best remember that fact. Saving face even in times of trouble, the chancellery never failed to underscore the gulf separating barbarian *basilei* from the one and only true "*Basileus* and *Autocrator* of the Romans." Such an attitude is easily understandable and perhaps excusable in its chronological context. In the East, the disintegrating Baghdad caliphate was the plaything of barbarian generals, acting as kingmakers among the pathetic descendants of the Abbasid house. In the West, the imperial dream, fallen into chaos after the disappearance of the Carolingians, was barely emerging from the destruction wrought by the new Viking and Magyar invaders. The pope himself, unable to keep mastery even over his own city of Rome, was in no position to maintain the haughty tone of Nicholas I. The Macedonian *Basileus* would indeed have had to be superhuman to overlook his military and cultural preeminence.

For all its justifications, the self-involvement of Byzantium with its achievements and its great past was a potential threat to its future. The antiquarian qualities of its intellectual and artistic "renaissance," enchanted with archaism and anachronism, the scorn of barbarian learning and the refusal to learn from foreigners, the inability to understand the language of fellow Christians—all these were ominous harbingers. In size, military prowess, careful legislation, wealth, and culture the Macedonian empire might seem a reincarnation of Justinian's, but it added few innovations or improvements to the past it so jealously guarded.

Internally, serious cracks threatened the brilliant surface of society. The necessity constantly to repromulgate the legislation against the en-

croachments of great landowners did not augur well for its effectiveness, and most of its provisions had to be repealed during the course of the eleventh century. A powerful landed aristocracy grew steadily outside court circles, threatening the imperial authority and disrupting the economy. Attached to their lands and concerned with the safeguarding of the frontiers, these provincial magnates viewed with contempt and antagonism the civilian bureaucracy, largely risen from the middle class, which crowded around the court and reciprocated their hatred with interest. The Church, which had mastered the techniques of arousing popular support during the period of Iconoclasm, often sided with the military against the emperor. When the extinction of the Macedonian line freed the various factions to play kingmakers, military and civilian emperors alternated on the throne in an increasingly acrimonious struggle.

Meanwhile new threats grew unnoticed both in the East and in Italy. The difficulties in the West were largely nonmilitary, although a band of Norman adventurers profited from the disaffection of local Byzantine generals to conquer most of southern Italy. As in the case of the earlier Photian schism, the Great Schism of 1054 had both Roman and Constantinopolitan aspects. At Rome, the activity of the Saxon emperors brought new Germanic pressures to bear on the papacy, while the growing influence of the reforming party within the Church revived the ideas of papal supremacy and independence from secular interference once formulated by Nicholas I. The election of reforming popes by the middle of the century, and their alliance with the new Norman state, whose conquests made it the natural enemy of Byzantium, understandably stiffened the attitude of Rome toward the East. In Constantinople, the ambitious patriarch Michael Cerularius, making the most of the prestige of his see among the Slavs and of the weakness of the last Macedonian heiresses, attempted to reassert the authority of the Church against the Crown. Refusing all compromises, he thwarted imperial policy, plotted with the army, and fomented popular uprisings. The East-West controversy, which centered ostensibly on theological questions, ended in a deadlock, but was not immediately irreparable. The emperor-consort, Constantine IX Monomachus, worried by the Italian crisis, was ready to make concessions. The main violence of the quarrel came from the intractable personality of Michael Cerularius and the equally intransigent papal legate, cardinal Humbert of Silva-Candida. Even after Michael's riots had blocked all negotiations and Humbert had theatrically laid his bull of excommunication on the high altar of Hagia Sophia on July 16, 1054, the breach might have been healed. The legates were legally powerless, since the pope's death in April had canceled their mandate. The mutual excommunication of the patriarch and the legates did not necessarily involve the ultimate protagonists: the pope and the em-

peror. No one could guess at the time that this schism would be more permanent than the many which had preceded it, and, in fact, all cooperation between Rome and Constantinople was not ended, as the Crusades later demonstrated. But the schism manifested once again the fundamental differences separating the two halves of Christendom. The Latins kept a memory of Byzantine double-dealing from the conflicting policies of the emperor and the patriarch; the Greeks did not forget the scandal of rude and unorthodox foreigners profaning the holiest shrine of their sacred city. Mutual antagonism was strengthened, and the lesson of the ease with which popular risings could be instigated in defense of the faith was not lost on posterity.

The threat in the East was more immediately evident. The imperial system of balance of power in this area had been destroyed by the Petcheneg replacement of the Khazars and the neutralization of help from Christianized Russia, gradually cut off from the Black Sea. The buffer kingdoms of Bulgaria and Armenia had been obliterated by the annexations of Basil II. The new military frontier society which had grown in central Anatolia out of the perpetual state of war with the Muslims had little in common with the population of the capital. Such were the inauspicious conditions under which the empire had to face the unforeseen attack of the Seljuk Turks.

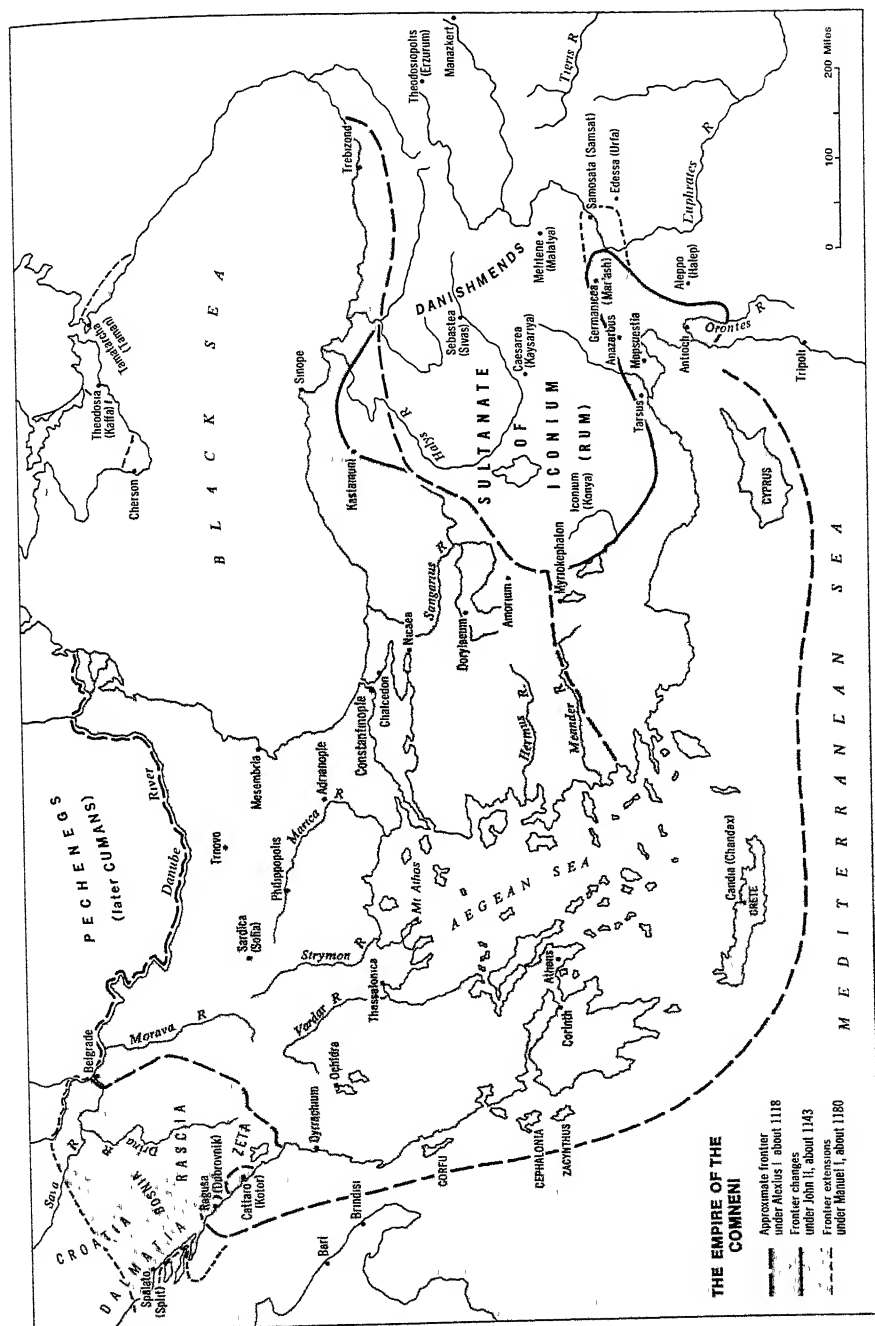
The primary interest of the Seljuks was not the West, but rather the control of Baghdad and the rich lands of northern Syria as well as the destruction of the Fatimid caliphate in Egypt, whose power threatened the Abbasids and whose heterodox Shi'ite beliefs were an abomination to the rigidly orthodox Turks. The imperial defeat at Manazkert in 1071 by the Seljuk sultan Alp Arslan was not the final catastrophe that it is often depicted as being, but the loss of Anatolia by the empire was a gradual and indirect result of the Turkish invasions. Preoccupied with the task of consolidating their power farther to the east, the Seljuks used Asia Minor as a dumping ground for their restless Turcoman contingents, whose normal pattern of nomadism and pillage presented a constant threat to any stable society. Moreover, the Seljuks had neither sufficient personnel nor the administrative experience to handle the vast territories they had overrun. Anarchy resulted, and Asia Minor was fragmented among local tribal chieftains. The warlike and pastoral Turcomans, who required large expanses of grassland for their flocks, obliterated cities, deforested the land, destroyed its agriculture, and permanently altered its climate and economy. Anatolia became a land of steppes, marshes, and dust bowls. The untamed Byzantine border soldiers, the *akritai*, found much in common with the fanatical Turcoman warriors, the *gazi*, and many conversions to Islam altered the sociological picture as well. The entire fabric of urban, seden-

tary, Christian Asia Minor was transformed. With the coming of the Seljuks the last main source of imperial resources and manpower was irretrievably lost.

The collapse of the Byzantine state under the stress of these losses and of internal strife was averted for a time by the accession in 1081 of Alexis I Comnenus, the representative of one of the great Anatolian families. But the victory of the Comneni also marked the domination of the state by the military aristocracy, which gradually resulted in the obliteration of the civilian bureaucratic pattern Byzantium had inherited from the Roman past. Since it was out of the question for Alexis I to renew the Macedonian legislation curbing the great landowners, of whom he was one, the government relied more and more for its defense on mercenaries and the good will of provincial magnates, to whom it granted large estates, or *pronoia*, in exchange for their services. In theory the recipients of these territories, the *pronoia*rs, were imperial officials, and their lands never became hereditary. But the military character of the grants, the fiscal and legal immunities which were soon associated with them, and the gradual binding of the peasants to these lands assimilated them far more to Western feudal holdings than to the centralized bureaucratic system of the earlier empire.

Alexis Comnenus and his successors, John II and Manuel I, were brilliant commanders. At the head of their armies or maneuvering skillfully among their divided enemies, the Comneni regained much of the lost territory. It was the empire's Indian summer. The Balkans were successfully defended against Norman inroads from Italy, the Petchenegs and Serbs defeated, the coast, if not the interior, of Anatolia reconquered. Marriage alliances were negotiated with Hungary and Germany. By the middle of the twelfth century imperial armies made victorious reappearances in Syria and Italy. Manuel Comnenus' entrance into Antioch in 1159, adorned with the full imperial regalia and surrounded by the glittering Varangian guard, followed at a distance by the unarmed king of Jerusalem, and preceded by the bareheaded and barefooted prince of Antioch leading the emperor's horse by the bridle, spelled out all too clearly to a population enchanted by visible symbols who was the master of the Crusader states.

However, these remarkable achievements proved transitory. The decentralization of the government forced the emperor to rely heavily on expensive mercenary contingents, and the catastrophic defeat of Myriokephalon in 1176 completed the disaster of Manzikert one century earlier. The *pronoia* multiplied, limiting imperial jurisdiction. Central European alliances proved inconclusive, and the powerful Hohenstaufen empire stood in the way of Western reconquests. The economic stability of the empire was deeply compromised, and the imperial currency had to be devalued. The concession of extensive trade privileges and customs im-



munities to Venice in 1082, soon followed by similar grants to the other Italian maritime cities, showed the seriousness of the crisis. For the first time, the balance and initiative of trade turned against Constantinople, and the imperial fleets gradually atrophied as foreign merchants took over. The long nautical and commercial tradition tracing its origin back to ancient Greece was coming to an end.

Most serious of all, the breach with the West deepened beyond recall during the period of the Crusades. The growing antagonism between the Latins and the Greeks was not a systematic or constant phenomenon. The break in ecclesiastical ties that followed the Schism of 1054 did not preclude further contacts. The bride of John II Comnenus was a Hungarian princess; his son Manuel married the sister-in-law of the Holy Roman Emperor Conrad of Franconia. On their way to the Holy Land in 1097, the Crusaders stopped in Constantinople, and with the exception of the count of Toulouse, all of the leaders acknowledged the overlordship of the emperor Alexis I by doing him homage and swearing the full feudal oath. Despite misgivings caused by the presence among the Crusaders of his bitter Norman enemies, the emperor gave them supplies and his armies guided them as far as Antioch.

Circumstances seemed even more favorable during the reign of Manuel I. The emperor, twice married to Latin princesses, seems to have possessed a singularly winning personality and to have been enamored of Western ways. Latin chroniclers speak of him as a perfect knight, invincible in tournaments, and praise his munificence and generosity. Manuel encouraged concessions and amiable discussions in matters of religion, and his troops campaigned side by side with the Latin armies in Egypt. The very transformation of Byzantine society in this period brought it closer to that of the contemporary West. The vast *pronoia*, worked by serfs and all but free of imperial supervision, the turbulent military aristocracy, the gradual deurbanization of the land, and the reliance on a rural economy provided an atmosphere familiar to the Latin feudal nobles. On the basis of these outward similarities the two societies momentarily fraternized, and the fate of future relations hung in the balance.

Disastrously for Byzantium, the forces of disruption were, however, to gain the day. Imperial diplomacy and good intentions could not dispel the atmosphere of mutual distrust and dislike present from the first confrontation. The disasters of the late eleventh century had abated none of the emperor's pretensions, like the later Bourbons, "they had learned nothing and forgotten nothing." Alexis' daughter the princess Anna Comnena sneered at the boorishness and deceit of the Latin "barbarians," while the demands of Byzantine court ceremonial shocked the touchy pride of Western barons. The imperial authorities in Constantinople, alarmed from the

first by the arrival of the Normans, saw their fears justified by the Crusaders' refusal to return Antioch to them, although the oath sworn by their leaders included the retrocession of all reconquered imperial territory. On their side, the Crusaders claimed that the withdrawal of the imperial army before Antioch had been a betrayal which freed them from their commitment. This version, envenomed by Norman propaganda, gained currency in the West, particularly at Rome, where the pope, faced by the formidable threat of the German empire, was in no position to dispense with the support of his Norman allies. Increasingly in Latin eyes, therefore, the Greeks became traitors as well as heretics unfit to consort with true Christians. In 1147, the leaders of the Second Crusade had seriously discussed the seizure of Constantinople on the way to Palestine, and blamed imperial treachery for their failures. The marriage in 1186 of the future emperor Henry VI and the Norman heiress Constance made the Holy Roman Empire the heir of Norman enmity toward Byzantium. By the Third Crusade relations had deteriorated to the point where Latin leaders preferred to avoid imperial territory, and both Frederic Barbarossa in the Balkans and Richard Lionheart in Cyprus comported themselves as though on enemy soil. The death of Manuel Comnenus brought matters to the explosion point. A coalition of imperial officials, outraged by the favors showered by the emperor on the Latins, of the Greek clergy, still unreconciled with Rome, and of the city population of Constantinople, ruined by the commercial concessions granted to Italian merchants, backed Manuel's cousin Andronicus Comnenus. A formidable uprising in 1182 resulted in the murder of the Latin empress dowager, the overthrow of her young son Alexis II, and the massacre of all the Latins in the capital. Within twenty years Western retaliation brought about the sack of Constantinople by the Fourth Crusade. The irrevocable had now taken place.

The enigmatic figure of Andronicus Comnenus, enlightened reformer and brutal oppressor, brilliant general and sensual voluptuary, soon disappeared in the whirlwind which he had raised, leaving a defenseless empire stripped of its last bulwark against the aroused fury of the West: the military aristocracy decimated by the imperial reign of terror. In spite of the paradoxes of his character, Andronicus had at least shared his family's devotion to duty; his successors, the Angeli, seem to have raised their sights no higher than family feuds and personal enrichment, while the empire spiraled downward into chaos. The Normans renewed their attacks, seizing the strategic ports of Dyrrachium and Thessalonike. Native Balkan rulers reasserted their independence: the brothers Peter and Asen in Bulgaria and the Grand Župan Stephen Nemanja in Serbia laid the foundations of new states on former imperial territory. Far to the east, a secondary Comnenian line entrenched itself in Trebizond under the pro-

tection of the powerful queen Tamar of Georgia and refused to recognize the Angeli, while other Comnenian territories in Asia Minor were swallowed by the minor Seljuk successor states. Under these conditions it is little wonder that an effective opposition could not be made by the fragmented empire when the armies of the Fourth Crusade appeared under the walls of Constantinople in June, 1203.

Unfortunately for the future of Eastern Christendom, the Latins furnished no better answers for the crisis than had been found by the Greeks. The greatest damage to the new Latin empire created by the Crusaders was probably the bitter hatred instilled in the native population by the brutal sack of the capital and by the attempt to force Latin practices and jurisdiction on the Greek Church. The leaders of the Crusade were themselves aware of the harm of their actions; the chronicler Geoffroi de Villehardouin sadly confessed that because of the sins of the looters, "Our Lord began to love them less," and Pope Innocent III wrote with profound indignation

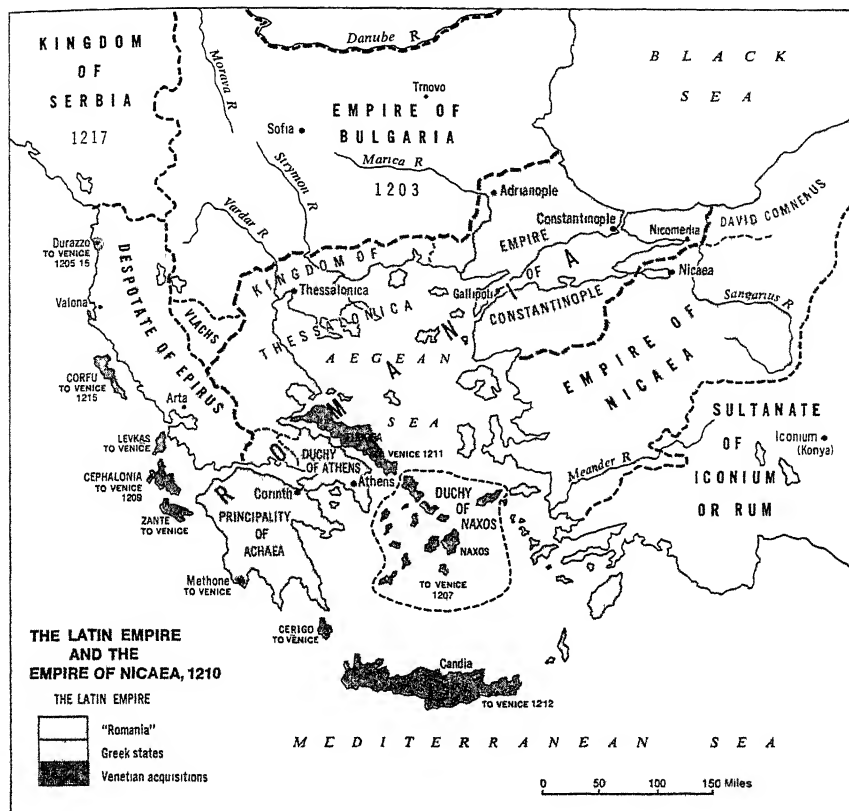
How can the Church of the Greeks be expected to return to devotion to the Apostolic See when it has seen the Latins setting an example of evil and doing the devil's work so that already, and with good reason, the Greeks hate them worse than dogs

Ominously the Greek historian in exile, Nicetas Choniates, recorded the native point of view:

The accursed Latins . . . lust after our possessions and would like to destroy our race . . . between them and us there is a wide gulf of hatred. . . Even the Saracens are merciful and kind [in comparison with these creatures] who bear the cross of Christ on their shoulders.

Only in the Morea, as the Peloponnese came to be called, did the Latins wisely invite the cooperation of their Greek subjects; elsewhere the insulted *pronoïars* and the population in general rallied sullenly around their implacable clergy.

Even on its own terms, however, the new empire was not viable. Factions had appeared among the leaders of the Crusade even before the siege of Constantinople, and the entire expedition had been excommunicated by Pope Innocent III. The Venetians were the only gainers from the events. They obtained control of the new Latin patriarchate of Constantinople together with the church of Hagia Sophia, and made their doge "lord of a quarter and a half of the Roman Empire"; all the bases necessary for an absolute control of communications and trade were in their hands. The new emperor, Baldwin of Flanders, was in a far more precarious position. Elected with the help of the Venetians, who feared the greater prestige of



his Italian rival, Boniface of Montferrat, Baldwin was at best a compromise choice. From the first, the characteristic weakness of the Latin empire, as of the Crusader kingdom of Jerusalem, was the inability of the ruler to assert his superiority. Chosen by his equals, with an inadequate territorial base and a sacked capital, hampered by the multiple regulations of feudal customs, the emperor was entirely dependent on the good will of vassals whose primary interest was the consolidation of their own domains. The Greek empire in exile at Nicaea proved too strong to be driven out of Asia Minor, and in Epirus another Greek dynasty defied the intruders. The papacy remained antagonistic to a patriarchate created without its permission. Rashly the Crusaders spurned the overtures of the third and ablest of the Asen brothers, Kalojan, or Johannitza, whom Innocent III had crowned king of Bulgaria almost immediately after the capture of Constantinople. Reviving the bitter memory of Basil II, Kalojan styled himself "killer of the

Romans," whom he routed near Andrinople in April, 1205. Less than a year after his coronation, Baldwin of Flanders vanished on the battlefield, and two years later Boniface of Montferrat, king of Thessalonike, fell in the Bulgar war. Despite the accession of Baldwin's abler brother, Henry of Hainault, the empire was soon at bay:

The land of Constantinople was as if deprived of all protection. The lord emperor . . . was a pauper. All the paid knights departed. The ships of the Venetians, Pisans, Anconitans, and other nations were ready to leave, and some indeed had already left. When we saw that the land was abandoned we feared danger because it was surrounded by enemies. Asen, king of the Vlachs, menaced it from the north, Vatatzes [of Nicaea] from the east and south, and Manuel [of Epirus] from the west. Therefore we proposed to negotiate . . .

Only the division of the enemy permitted survival for a time. On July 25, 1261, almost without opposition, and probably with the collusion of the city population, a Greek army reentered triumphantly into Constantinople.

The victory of 1261 belonged to the emperor of Nicaea, although his empire, hemmed in between Latin and Seljuk principalities and unrecognized by Trebizond or Epirus, had had an inauspicious beginning. The first emperor in exile, Theodore I Lascaris, was not of outstandingly noble family, and his coronation outside Constantinople, albeit by the patriarch, was of dubious legitimacy. The policy of the Lascarid emperors to return to earlier Macedonian traditions of social legislation, a guided economy, and centralization around a learned court produced at best a pale shadow of former splendor. The main trump of the Nicaean house was its unquestionable diplomatic skill, which made it the true heir of its more powerful predecessors. Intriguing with the Western emperor to exploit Hohenstaufen opposition to the papacy, which now rallied to the Latin empire; allied with Kalojan's great successor, John II Asen; continually fomenting dissensions among its enemies, Nicaea outstayed all its rivals. First the ruler of Epirus, who also claimed the imperial title, fell before the Bulgars at the Battle of Klokotnica in 1230. A decade later, after the death of Czar John II Asen, who styled himself "In Christ our God Czar and Autocrat of the Bulgars," and proved the equal of Nicaea in duplicity and talent, the Second Bulgarian Empire, sacked by the Mongols, began to disintegrate. The last Latin emperor, Baldwin II, ascended the throne in 1228 as a child of eleven, adding the troubles of a long regency to an already impossible situation. The capture of most of the lords of the Morea in 1259 at the Battle of Pelagonia allowed the new Nicaean emperor, Michael VIII Paleologus, to blackmail them out of most of their lands. His alliance with Genoa in 1261, neutralizing the Venetian navy, sealed the doom of Constantinople. On August 15, the Feast of the Assumption of the Virgin, preceded by the icon symbolizing her return to her favorite city cleansed of

heretical pollution, Michael VIII entered Constantinople in a solemn procession. At the church of Hagia Sophia, the emperor and empress were recrowned to underscore the reestablishment of legitimacy and tradition.

The remarkable talent of Michael VIII had won back the imperial prize, but even though he successfully walked the tightrope of international intrigue for the rest of his days and bested all the coalitions raised against him, his accession proved the beginning of a two-century agony for the empire. The catastrophic results of the Fourth Crusade could not be undone. The empire regained by Michael was only a fragment. In northern Greece and the Morea, Frankish principalities survived. Venice kept the control of the sea lanes and of the islands of the archipelago. Trebizond remained out of reach, and the loyalty of Epirus and the Morea was at best doubtful. Most of Asia Minor was in enemy hands, and in the Balkans the Serbian empire of the Nemanjids grew constantly more threatening. Not even the national, Greek cohesion of the new empire, stripped of its Slavic and Oriental lands, could offset the fact that little more than a narrow band of territory on either side of the capital was an inadequate base for the survival of the state. No longer the master of its own destiny, the empire lingered at the sufferance of external forces.

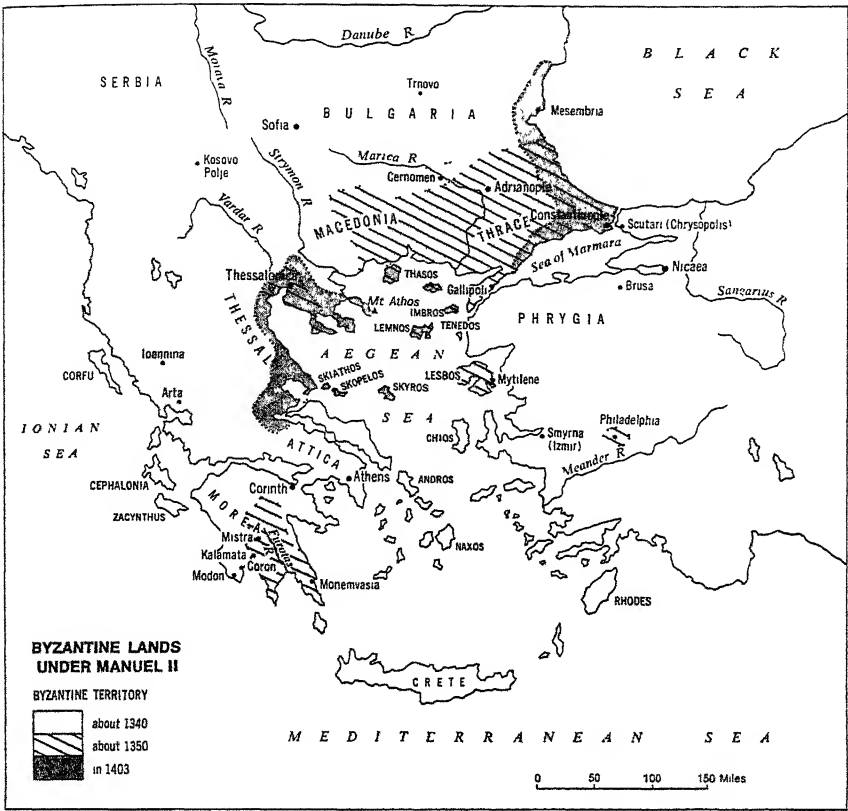
The internal situation accelerated the process of disintegration. The Paleologues had neither the prestige nor the power to maintain the Nicaean attempt at social legislation against the *pronoïars*, whose centrifugal tendencies obliterated the last vestiges of centralization. Unchecked grants of fiscal immunity perilously reduced the shrunken finances of the state. The abandonment not only of trade but of the remaining customs revenues to the Italian republics left Constantinople at their mercy. From the middle of the fourteenth century, Byzantium, bereft of its navy, became a minor land power, flooded by cheap goods from the West, its gold reserves drained out by the unfavorable balance of trade enforced by Italian warships. In 1348 the revenue of Constantinople was a paltry 30,000 gold pieces as against the 200,000 of Genoese Pera across the Golden Horn. The imperial crown jewels went to secure indispensable loans, and in 1355 the strategic island of Tenedos commanding the entrance to the Straits had to be sold for 30,000 ducats. The ultimate humiliation was reached in 1369 when the emperor John V was arrested for debt in Venice, while seeking financial assistance in the West.

The poverty of the empire also intensified internal disorders. In 1304 unpaid Catalan mercenary companies ravaged Asia Minor, stormed across the Straits, wrested Athens from its Frankish dynasty, and installed themselves for sixty years in central Greece under the distant overlordship of the king of Aragon. In 1342 the wealthy city of Thessalonike was seized by a popular party, which proclaimed a program of social welfare and religious puritanism, massacred the upper classes, and established a commune which

maintained itself until 1350, thus isolating the city from the rest of the empire. The development of local separatist tendencies, also visible in aristocratic circles, exploited quarrels within the imperial family resulting from the absence of a clear order of succession. Both the opposition of the young Andronicus III to his grandfather Andronicus II and the usurpation of John VI Cantacuzenus against the legitimate heir John V Paleologus found regional support which weakened still further the cohesion of the empire.

The continuous state of civil war in the mid-fourteenth century also aided foreign powers. At various points in his career, John Cantacuzenus owed his survival to the support of the Serbian czar or the Ottoman sultan. The danger in Serbia was the first to manifest itself. Nemanja's second son, Stephen the First-Crowned, had been recognized as king as early as 1217, and two years later his brother St. Sava had been consecrated archbishop by the patriarch of Nicaea. Checked at first by internal difficulties and the rise of the Asen dynasty in Bulgaria, the Nemanjids began to regain their superiority with the accession of Stephen-Uroš II Milutin in 1282. By 1299 the Serbian czar successfully coerced Andronicus II into giving him his daughter the princess Simonis in a marriage which reflected all too well the new fallen state of Byzantium. Not only was Simonis, a *porphyrogenita*, given to a barbarian whose court had horrified the imperial envoys, but there was little hope that the five-year-old princess would have much influence over a man old enough to be her grandfather. The final crushing of the Bulgars in the next generation at the Battle of Velbužd in 1330 laid the basis for the Serbian expansion under its greatest czar, Stephen-Uroš IV Dušan (1331–1355). Overrunning the whole of Macedonia, and profiting from the war raging around John VI Cantacuzenus, Dušan had himself crowned at Skoplje in 1346 with a new and threatening title: "In Christ our God pious *Basileus* and *Autocrator* of the Serbians and the Romans." The subsequent conquest of Albania, Epirus, and Thessaly bolstered Dušan's claim that he was "Lord of almost the whole of the Roman Empire." Constantinople could only thank providence for the czar's premature death and the rapid disintegration of his realm, which preserved the city from Serbian domination.

Where the Serbs had failed, the Turks would be successful. The origins of the Ottoman state are lost in legend, but two factors seem to have provided for its greatness. Its exposed position close to Constantinople meant either early annihilation by the empire or the forging of a powerful nucleus under the stress of constant war. The remoteness of the Ottoman principality from the East did not imply a lack of communications, for the great east-west highway across Anatolia kept it in economic and, more importantly, ideological contact with the centers of Islam. Perpetual defenders of Islam, placed in the first line of battle, the Ottomans revived the



ideal of the *gazi* warrior for the faith, and consequently rallied Muslim loyalties against the infidel. Byzantine internal dissensions furthered their undertakings. Despite its expansion in western Asia Minor, the Ottoman state was still a minor power when its support of John Cantacuzenus made possible its expansion into the Balkans. The victories of Sultan Murad I, master of Andrinople in 1365, of Macedonia and southern Serbia at the Battle of the Marica in 1371, lord of the Balkans on the tragic field of Kossovo in 1389, which cost the life of the victor, isolated Constantinople from the West. Only the ill-fated campaign of Murad's son Bayezid I Ilderim against a new Mongol invasion led by Tamerlane, culminating in the Turkish disaster at Ankara in 1402, gave another fifty years' grace to the empire.

Faced with mortal threats in the east and the west, and a hopeless situation at home, the only conceivable salvation for Byzantium lay in help from the Latins. Realizing the common danger, some Westerners rallied

against the Turks, but both the latter-day crusades of Nicopolis (1396) and Varna (1444), insufficiently planned and supported, ended in disaster. In the main, the West, concerned with its own problems—the Babylonian Captivity of the Church and the Hundred Years' War—had little attention to spare for distant Eastern woes. Even when the Latins were willing to help Byzantium, the price they invariably demanded was the recognition of the Roman ecclesiastical superiority which they had failed to impose during their own domination. Again and again—in 1274 at Lyons, in the name of the shrewd Michael VIII, who may have thought that Constantinople was “well worth a mass”; nearly a century later, by the emperor John V in person, during his journey for help to Rome, finally, in desperation, at the Council of Florence in 1438–1439—Byzantine rulers accepted the union with Rome. But, though they might do this in their own name, they soon found that they could not force the union on their subjects. Fanning the memory of Latin hatred, appealing to the people to save their faith from heresy, the Orthodox clergy made it impossible to implement the imperial policy, and the repeated failure of the union after solemn oaths only instilled further in Western minds the long-held beliefs about Byzantine duplicity.

The last blow to the empire was the disaffection of the intellectuals, the traditional supporters of the court. The migration of scholars which enriched Italian culture was a drain on the empire; insufficient talent remained, and for the first time mental stagnation and anti-intellectualism manifested themselves at Constantinople. The artistic tradition proved strong enough to produce another renaissance and such masterpieces as the Church of the Chora, later renamed Karije Djami, but the intellectual milieu was permeated with the archaising traits already visible in a lesser degree under the Macedonians. Authors seemed to seek refuge from the grimness of the present in the more glorious past in an atmosphere of unreality which offered no solutions. Despite the translation of Western works into Greek and the continuation of active interchanges, Aristotelian logic failed to win over most Greek scholars from their traditional attachment to Platonic idealism. The new methods and concepts attending the revival of learning in the West found no echoes in Eastern antiquarianism. The enormous popularity of the Hesychast doctrine with its total concentration on the mystical vision of a reunion with God out of time and space bears witness to the contemporary Byzantine rejection of the nascent humanism of the West. The traditional loyalty to the City, the Emperor, the Faith gave way to the acrimony of religious controversies; the intellectuals departed, while religious leaders, rejecting the “heretical” emperor and his obedient tool, the patriarch, sought guidance away from the capital in the intransigent and otherworldly monastic community on Mount

Athos. The empire was finally turning away from its millennial tradition of intellectual inquiry, from its past loyalties, from the realities of the present.

Bereft of external support and of its own inner core, Byzantium could only await passively the recovery of Ottoman power. On May 29, 1453, the army of Sultan Muhammad II breached the land walls of Constantinople after having dragged its entire fleet overland into the Golden Horn to isolate the city from the sea. Faithful to his trust, the emperor Constantine XI died in the ruins of his capital. Belatedly, the West was shocked by the long-expected news, but the Orthodox world could only solace itself with legends that the church of Hagia Sophia had miraculously and secretly been preserved from desecration.

The political importance of the empire had ended long before the fall of the city, but its intangible influence had always transcended its physical boundaries. Imperial dreams had always been tied in some degree to a vision of Constantinople. Carolingian and Saxon emperors, Norman kings, the distant Queen Tamar of Georgia, and the Slavic rulers of the Balkans had all aped the formulas of Byzantine protocol and chosen to be represented adorned with the imperial regalia. Italian painters working for Renaissance patrons instinctively turned to Byzantine models when they sought to represent the true Christian ruler: Piero della Francesca's *Constantine the Great* at Arezzo, and Benozzo Gozzoli's *Magi* in the Medici chapel in Florence are unmistakable portraits of the emperor John VIII Paleologus. In tangible terms, both the Greek refugee scholars and the manuscripts they had brought with them preserved the imperial intellectual tradition. The mixed religious, linguistic, and artistic tradition of the present-day Balkans still reflects the ambiguous status of medieval Illyricum and the extent of imperial prestige among the western and southern Slavs.

Far to the north, in distant Moscow, emerging in the fifteenth century from the Mongol domination which had cut it off from the rest of Christendom, the ecclesiastical advisers of the prince sought to preserve the imperial institutions and claims, and to exploit the memory of Byzantine glory to their own advantage:

Because the Old Rome has collapsed on account of heresy . . . and because the Second Rome which is Constantinople is now in the possession of the godless Turks, thy kingdom O pious Tsar, is the Third Rome. It surpasses in devotion every other, and all Christian kingdoms are now merged in thy realm. Thou art the only Christian sovereign in the world, the Master of all faithful Christians. . . .

All Christian empires are fallen and in their stead stands alone the Empire of our ruler in accordance with the prophetic books. Two Romes have fallen, but the Third stands, and a Fourth there will not be.

For Further Reading

- Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. IV.
 Diehl, C., *Byzantium. Greatness and Decline*.
 Grabar, A., *The Art of Byzantium*.
 Hussey, J. M., *The Byzantine World*.
 Ostrogorsky, G., *History of the Byzantine State*.
 Runciman, S., *Byzantine Civilization*
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 Vasiliev, A. A., *History of the Byzantine Empire*.
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38 The Slavs and Early Russia

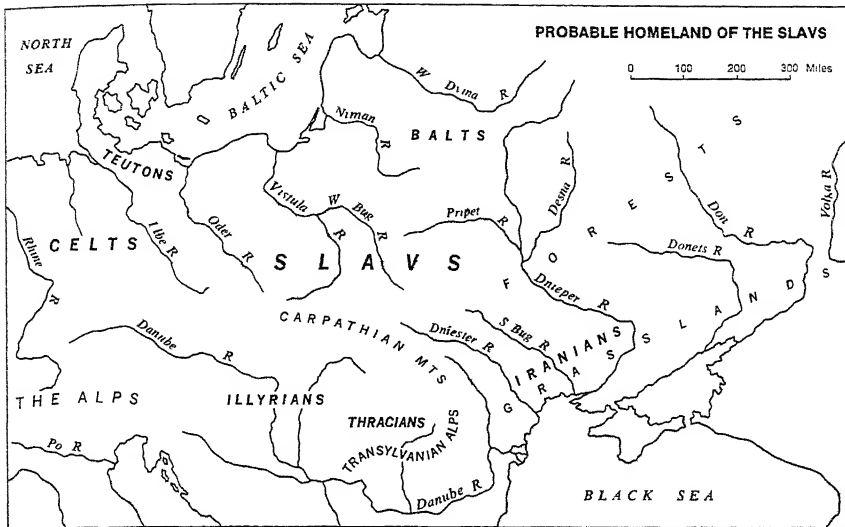
The Slavs, who in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries saw themselves as the true heirs of the Roman tradition, began their historical career in obscurity, controversy, and confusion. Almost every step of their early development—the original homeland, the migrations, tribal names, and foreign contacts—has been attended by fierce disagreement. Although random references may occur as early as Herodotus, precise information concerning the Slavic peoples does not go back before the sixth century A.D. and their effective political role begins only in the ninth.

Recent scholarship suggests that the Slavic homeland was far more extensive than the Pripyet marshes to which historians had formerly confined them; most of the broad agricultural lands stretching north of the Carpathians from the Elbe to the Vistula and perhaps even to the upper Dnieper should be considered. From this indefinite area, probably centered on the Oder and the Vistula, the Slavic tribes fanned out in three directions.

The eastward migration toward the Ukraine must have begun even before the spread of the Irano-Scythian nomads to this area around 500 B.C., but the Iranian element remained dominant for centuries in southern Russia as Sarmatians and Alans succeeded their Scythian kinsmen in the steppes linking Asia and Europe around 200 B.C. Whether or not the Antes, who survived the passage of Goths and Huns and moved westward from the basin of the Don to rule the lower Dniester and Danube until they were annihilated by the Asiatic Avars in the first years of the seventh century, were Sarmatians or Slavs is still hotly debated. Byzantine sources assure us that they spoke a Slavic language in the sixth century. But what-

SOUTHERN SLAVS	WESTERN SLAVS	EASTERN SLAVS (Russia)
c 517 Slavic tribes begin to cross the Danube into the Balkans		
c 679 Bulgars cross Danube	c 628–658 Principality of Samo in Moravia	7th cent Scandinavian infiltration of Russia begins
c 680–1018 First Bulgarian Empire		
813 First Bulgar siege of Constantinople	846–870 Reign of Rastislav in Great Moravia	c 860 Riurik in Novgorod, first Russian raid on Constantinople
864 Baptism of Boris-Michael of Bulgaria	863–864 Cyrillo-Methodian mission to Moravia 906 Magyars sack Great Moravia	c 880–912 Rise of Kiev under Oleg
	10th cent Premyslid dynasty in Bohemia, Piast dynasty in Poland	c 968 End of Khazar empire
	992–1025 Reign of Boleslav the Brave in Poland	989 Baptism of Vladimir of Kiev 1035–1054 Zenith of Kiev under Laroslav the Wise; Metropolitan of Kiev created
	1102–1138 Boleslav III of Poland	1113–1125 Reign of Vladimir Monomakh at Kiev
	1140–1173 Vladimir II hereditary king of Poland	1157–1174 Reign of Andrei Bogolubskii at Suzdal 1169 Suzdal sacks Kiev
1168–1196 Stephen Nemanja founds the Serbian Empire		1176–1212 Vsevolod "Big Net" prince of Suzdal 1198–1205 Zenith of Galicia under Roman of Smolensk
1197–1207 John Asen (Kalojan) founds the Second Bulgarian Empire		
1217 Coronation of Stephen I as Czar of Serbia		
1218–1241 Zenith of the Second Bulgarian Empire under John II Asen		1223 Mongol defeat of the Russian princes at Kalka
1241 Mongol sack of the Second Bulgarian Empire	1241 Mongol sack of Poland	1242 Alexander Nevski's victory over the Teutonic Knights at Lake Peipus; Golden Horde settles in southern Russia
	1253–1258 Zenith of Bohemia under Ottokar the Great	1282 Mongols sack Galicia

SOUTHERN SLAVS	WESTERN SLAVS	EASTERN SLAVS (Russia)
	1300 Wenceslas II of Bohemia king of Poland	
	1301 Wenceslas III of Bohemia crowned king of Hungary	
	1306 Accession of Luxembourg dynasty in Bohemia	1325-1341 Ivan I Kalita founds the Muscovite state
1336-1355 Zenith of Serbia under Stephen IV Dusan		1328 Metropolitan see moves from Kiev to Moscow
	1333 Restoration of Poland under Casimir III	
	1347 Emperor Charles IV king of Bohemia	
1371 Ottoman victory over Serbia on the Marica		1380 Dimitri Donskoi's victory over the Mongols at Kulikovo
1389 Ottoman victory at the first Battle of Kossovo	1386 Marriage of Jadwiga of Poland to Jagiello of Lithuania	1387 Galicia absorbed by Poland
	1410 Polish defeat of the Teutonic Knights at Tannenberg	
1448 Ottoman victory at the second Battle of Kossovo, Ottoman domination of the Balkans	1447 Union of Poland and Lithuania	
	1466 Second Peace of Thorn	1480 Ivan III proclaimed Czar and Autocrat of Russia
	1526 Ottoman victory at Mohács	1533-1584 Reign of Ivan IV the Terrible
	1547 Hapsburgs become hereditary kings of Bohemia	1552-1556 Russians take Kazan and Astrakhan
	1572 End of Jagiellonian dynasty in Poland	1598-1605 Boris Godunov Czar of Russia
		1604-1613 "Time of Troubles"; Polish intervention in Russia
		1613 Accession of Michael I Romanov in Russia
	1620 Battle of White Mountain; end of Bohemian independence	



ever the origin of the Antes, Iranian influences dominated their political institutions, and the Iranian world reached across the Russian Slavic tribes deep into central Europe as Sarmatian groups, such as the Croats and the Serbs, fled from the Huns to settle northwest of the Carpathians.

With the beginning of the Christian era, other Slavic tribes began to filter southward through the passes of the Carpathians and the plain of Hungary toward the Danube, which they crossed at the beginning of the sixth century, moving in the direction of Greece and Dalmatia. Like their eastern cousins, the southern Slavs weathered the overlordship of Goths, Huns, and Avars before most of them became part of the Balkan Bulgar empire toward the end of the seventh century. Finally, the vacuum left in central Europe by the westward migration of the Germanic tribes was gradually filled by Slavs, who began to cross the Elbe in large numbers into modern Bohemia and Moravia as well as in a considerable section of Germany by the third century A.D. By the seventh century, when all but the northernmost Slavic tribes were subject to the Avar empire, the migrations had all but ended, and only the future Polish tribes remained in the original heartland of the lower Oder and Vistula.

As tribe after tribe shook off Avar dominion, future national groups began to emerge from the amorphous Slavic mass, although we have no evidence for major differentiation even in language before the end of the first millennium. A fleeting state under the semilegendary leader Samo (c. 623–658) freed the Slavs of Moravia and Bohemia. The First Bulgarian Empire provided a framework for the Slavic tribes in the Balkans. The Croats and Serbs, pressed by Frankish expansion, moved southward to settle west of the Bulgars in the Dalmatian hinterland at the invitation of

the emperor Heraclius Far to the east, the Slavs, settled along the Dnieper, benefited from the establishment of the Turkic Khazar Empire which replaced the Avars and Bulgars in southern Russia, spreading its more benevolent overlordship over the neighboring tribesmen, and bringing them into the orbit of a more civilized world through its role as middleman in the active trade linking the brilliant civilization of the Baghdad caliphate and the more primitive world to the north

Until their Christianization in the ninth and tenth centuries, the Slavs generally lacked the political and military organization needed to create cohesive independent states. Probably because of their contact with the Khazars and with the Bulgar state on the middle Volga, the Russian tribes may have developed trading cities along the great waterways linking the Baltic with the south. But Slavic society was primarily agricultural rather than truly nomad. Their tribal institutions centered on the authority of the family and the community of property. Their primitive military system forced them to accept, sometimes even to welcome, the protection of superior powers. Traditional accounts repeatedly point, rightly or wrongly, to foreign leaders uniting the scattered Slavs. Samo, the "Frankish merchant" from the West, Riurik, the Viking chieftain in Russia, more than two centuries later. Modern historians likewise see foreign elements as the catalyst bringing about the creation of Slavic states. Sarmatians, Avars, and Bulgars in central Europe and the Balkans, Iranians, Khazars, and eventually Scandinavians in Russia. And yet, in all cases, it was not the outsiders who left their imprint on the new states, but the Slavic substratum. Whether the Antes were Sarmatians or Slavs, whether the name *Rus* should properly designate Vikings or Slavs, the Antes of the sixth century and the Rus of the ninth spoke Slavic languages and were regarded as part of the Slavic world by their contemporaries. The Bulgars of the ninth century still addressed their chieftains as "khan" and wore the trousers and turbans of Asiatic nomads, but soon thereafter the Christian Bulgar ruler forgot his Turkish ways and language to become a Slavic "czar." Sooner or later everywhere, persistent and pervasive Slavic customs overcame the foreign pattern imposed upon them and broke through to the surface.

Among the Slavic groups, the southern branch was the first to attain real political power. Direct Slavic control of Greece had been broken by the crushing defeat inflicted on them at Patras in 805 by the emperor Nicephorus I, but the strategic position of the Bulgarian empire in the Balkans made for the creation of a powerful state poised between the Byzantine and Latin worlds. The conversion of Czar Boris-Michael in 864 and the perpetual Bulgar threat to Constantinople forced concessions from the Eastern empire. By the tenth century, Czar Peter, brother-in-law of the Byzantine emperor, boasted his own autonomous patriarch and church,

and was ceremoniously styled *Basileus*, an honor rarely conceded to foreigners. Thereafter, Byzantine control of the Balkans was never secure, and the initiative passed repeatedly to the Slavic states. To be sure, the internal weakness of Bulgaria interfered with the development of the first empire. The traditional clan structure had not been obliterated, and the chieftains, or boyars, opposing the centralizing efforts of the Crown, exploited dynastic quarrels, while Byzantium watched for the opportunity to reconquer its lost territories. By 1018, under the savage attacks of the emperor Basil II, the First Bulgarian Empire collapsed.

But the reestablishment of imperial power in the Balkans soon proved ephemeral. The Second Bulgarian Empire emerged by the end of the twelfth century during the chaos attending the fall of the Comnenian dynasty and the sack of Constantinople by the soldiers of the Fourth Crusade. Repeating the pattern of its predecessors, the Asen dynasty oscillated between East and West, receiving the crown from Pope Innocent III, yet dealing fatal blows to the Latin empire of Constantinople and intriguing simultaneously with and against the rival Greek empire of Nicaea.

When the Bulgars gave way after 1241 to the great Mongol invasion sweeping into Europe, the leadership of the Balkans remained in the hands of Slavs but moved farther west to the Serbs who had gradually emancipated themselves from Carolingian, Hungarian, or Byzantine domination. The Serbian empire of the Nemanjids came nearest to toppling Byzantium under the great czar Stephen-Uroš IV Dušan, who extended his rule over imperial lands from the Adriatic to the Aegean Sea and had himself crowned *Basileus* of the Serbians and the Romans. Dušan's dream was to create an empire on the model of Constantinople, but the position of his realm athwart the Balkans also made of it a meeting place and channel of transmission for both Western and Eastern influences—a remarkable Byzantine-Latin culture based on Slavic foundations. Dušan's court was reorganized on a Byzantine model, though some Slavic titles were preserved; the Serbian parafeudal system followed the Byzantine pattern; the new emperor flaunted his Orthodoxy and severely persecuted the "Latin heresy." Yet he simultaneously carried on active negotiations with the papacy and Venice, and Serbia grew rich on its transit commerce, even if the talent of Dušan's grandfather at counterfeiting Venetian currency won him a place in Dante's *Inferno*. The hybrid character of medieval Serbia is perhaps best exemplified by the great royal monastery of Dečani, where Franciscan architects from the Dalmatian coast raised a Byzantine dome over a striped façade of white and purple marble directly reminiscent of Italian counterparts at Siena or Orvieto, while on the interior walls the Nemanjid rulers are portrayed in the full imperial regalia of the Constantinopolitan court.

In spite of all of their aggressiveness and achievements, however, the early promise of the southern Slavs never reached total fulfillment, nor did their state survive the Middle Ages. Decentralized and quarreling among themselves, the Balkan states went down like a house of cards before the Ottoman onslaught. Except for isolated resistance in the mountains of Albania and some surviving vassal princes, the entire Balkan peninsula was Turkish by 1463. Its Slavic population would have four more centuries to wait before making its next bid for an independent political role.

To the western Slavs must belong the honor of creating the first national state devoid of foreign superstructure, and of providing the basis for later Slavic cultures. Great Moravia in the mid-ninth century sprang from the same territory as Samo's earlier state. The support of Constantinople allowed Prince Rastislav (846–870) to withstand the double threat of the Carolingians and the Bulgars, and to reunite the tribes of Bohemia and Moravia for a time while extending his dominions toward the Elbe and the Vistula. The new principality did not long survive him. The Magyar invaders from the East, urged on by the Germans, wiped out even the trace of the capital of Velehrad in 906 and drove a permanent wedge between the southern, western, and eastern branches of the Slavs. However, the contribution of Great Moravia was not exclusively political. As part of Rastislav's negotiations with Byzantium, the famous mission of Saints Cyril and Methodius in 863 brought both Greek Christianity and literacy to the area. The antagonism of German missionaries who won the ear of Rastislav's successor drove their Greek rivals from Moravia, and Bohemia came to acknowledge the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the see of Regensburg, but Methodius' disciples found refuge in Bulgarian lands. The school they founded at Ohrid in Macedonia became a great religious and cultural center, while the alphabet that Cyril had given to the Slavs survived temporary political vicissitudes to be adopted by their southern and eastern branches. No longer illiterate, endowed with their individual religious liturgy, the Slavs now developed the literary traditions which ensured their cultural survival even in moments of political eclipse.

The native dynasties of the Premyslids of Bohemia and the Piasts of Poland claimed in later times to be the heirs of Moravia. But in rejecting the Greek ties of Methodian Christianity and turning to the Latins, the western Slavs broke fundamentally with their southern and eastern cousins, who remained in the orbit of Byzantium. The Czech dukes, later kings of Bohemia, successfully imposed their authority over the population and preserved the autonomy of their territory against the Magyars and Poles, as well as against the imperialist pressure of the Germans. For a brief moment the Premyslids seemed about to dominate central Europe: in 1300 Wenceslas II of Bohemia was crowned king of Poland and raised his young son,

Wenceslas III, to the Hungarian throne in the following year. From the beginning, however, Bohemia had accepted the ecclesiastical authority of the Latins, and it remained within their orbit even after the creation of native Czech bishoprics. The Premyslid dynasty had likewise acknowledged itself the vassal of the Holy Roman Empire. This position brought power and honor to Bohemia—its *de facto* interference in German affairs was given a legal basis in the thirteenth century when the Bohemian king became one of the seven imperial electors—and the identity of the nation was maintained, but the Germanization of the area grew steadily. By 1306, after the murder of Wenceslas III placed a Luxemburger on the Czech throne, Bohemia became inextricably meshed in the nexus of the Western empire.

The remoteness of the Polish tribes left in the Slavic homeland delayed their evolution and unification until the end of the tenth century, and Poland never became as fully identified with the West as Bohemia. Fearful of the German eastward push across the Elbe, Duke Mieszko I (c. 960–992) upon his conversion took the fateful step of placing his realm under the direct suzerainty of the papacy, thus following Bohemia's path away from the other Slavs and toward the Latins. Yet his great successor, Boleslav I the Brave (992–1025), the true creator of the Polish state, obtained an independent archbishop for his realm, and his conquests led him as much to the East as to the West. He took Pomerania in 992–994, Prague in 1003, and Kiev in 1018. The ambivalence of Poland reflected in Boleslav's campaigns was as much a danger as a source of strength. These far-flung conquests could not be maintained, and the centralization of the kingdom was compromised. King Boleslav III (1102–1138) divided his realm into five principalities, thus bringing the centrifugal tendencies into the open, and the Mongol invasion of 1241 weakened the kingdom still further. In the north, the establishment of the order of Teutonic Knights in Pomerania intensified the German pressure and cut Poland from the Baltic at the very time when the Bohemian rulers were laying claim to the Polish crown.

The native reaction under the last of the Piasts, Casimir III the Great (1333–1377), restored Polish fortunes, and the University of Cracow, founded in 1364, soon proved a match for its great rival at Prague as a center of learning. The political revival culminated after Casimir's death, when, in 1386, the daughter of his Angevin successor, Queen Jadwiga, married the powerful duke of still-pagan Lithuania, Jagiello. The union of Poland and Lithuania in 1447 gave additional luster to the joint kingdoms. The great victory of Tannenberg in 1410 stopped the eastward advance of the Teutonic Knights. The Second Peace of Thorn in 1466 restored Poland's access to the sea, albeit sowing in the process the seeds of future

catastrophes by cutting off East Prussia from the rest of Germany. Jagiello's acquisition of Moldavia, Wallachia, and Bessarabia in the last years of the fourteenth century extended his power over an enormous corridor stretching between the Oder and the Dnieper and from the Baltic to the Black Sea.

Poland had reached her apogee, but if the kingdom had more than doubled its size and the German thrust been stopped, the danger from the East, where the growing Russian state faced the western Slavs across the upper Dnieper, had not been allayed. The continuing allegiance of the Poles to Western Christianity, Catholic or Protestant, and territorial rivalry alienated them from their eastern kinsmen. Ottoman advances in the Balkans and the Ukraine soon swallowed the Jagiellonian conquests in the south. After the dynasty came to an end with the death of Sigismund II in 1572, Poland was still strong enough to interfere in the affairs of Russia during the "Time of Troubles" of the seventeenth century. Nevertheless, the failure to align itself clearly with either the East or the West deprived Poland of effective supporters at the moment when the pressure of divisive interests affirming the rights of the nobility against the Crown strained the fabric of the state. The stage was all but set for the partitions of the eighteenth century.

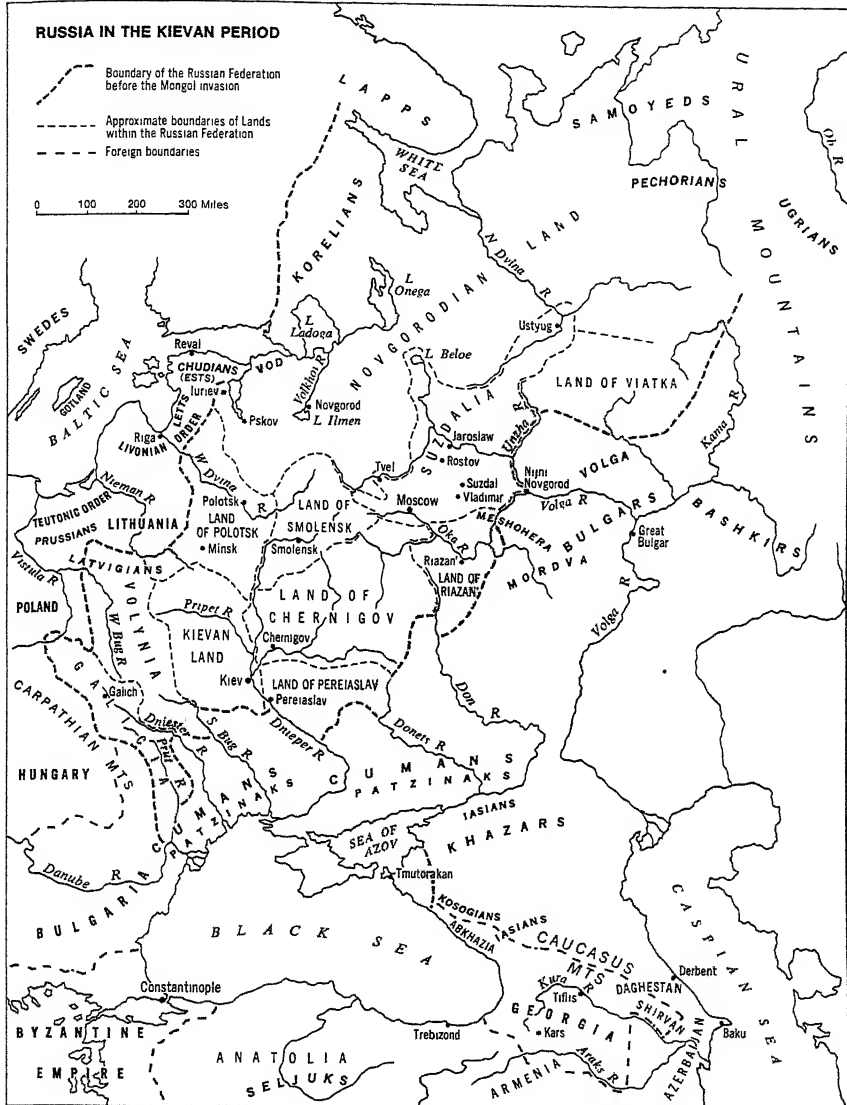
Although relatively latecomers on the European political and religious stage, the eastern Slavs in Russia ultimately became the most powerful group of all. The Slavs must have reached the area of the Dnieper as early as the first millennium B.C., but considerable controversy persists over their early history. A recurrent disagreement rages over the role of the Vikings in the formation of the early Russian state in the ninth century. Some Soviet scholars continue to play down the coming of the Vikings as incidental and purely ancillary, while most other specialists accept the thesis that in the ethnic, if not necessarily the geographical sense, the *Rhos* or *Rus* were originally Scandinavians who provided the unifying framework for the still-scattered Slavic tribes. In any case, the majority of the agricultural and commercial population of the Dnieper basin was Slavic, and the tribes had developed beyond a primitive level of culture under the influence of the Khazar empire to which they were tributary.

The Scandinavians were not newcomers to Russia. From the eighth century on, they had traveled down the great rivers from the Baltic to the Caspian and the Sea of Azov, drawn by the profitable trade with Baghdad in which the Khazars and the Volga Bulgars were middlemen. Whether or not a "Scandinavian khanate" was actually established in the region of Tmutorakan on the isthmus of Kertch, the presence of Vikings is attested by the early ninth century. The routes favored by the northern traders first carried them along the Volga or the Don toward the East. Muslim coins

vastly outnumber Byzantine ones in the Viking hoards of Sweden and Gotland. Gradually, however, the fame of Constantinople, the fabulous Mikligarðr of northern legends and Tsargrad of the Russians, brought the Scandinavians by way of the Dvina-Dnieper system, which became the classic "Way from the Varangians to the Greeks," into the Black Sea. The Rus first attacked the Byzantine capital in 860.

The earliest Viking center, according to Russian tradition, was in the region of the northern city of Novgorod, to which the semilegendary Riurik had come together with his brothers and retainers. Before the end of the ninth century, however, his kinsman, Helgi or Oleg, had moved southward to the strategic city of Kiev, commanding the Dnieper route on the westernmost limit of the Khazar sphere, and laid there the foundation of the new state. From Kiev the Rus attacked the neighboring Slavic tribes and continued their attempts against Constantinople. Progress was slow, the conquest of the Slavs took generations, and the extensive commercial advantages conceded by Byzantium were occasionally offset by disasters such as the death of Prince Sviatoslav, ambushed in 972 by the nomad Petchenegs at the instigation of the empire. Nor was the process of Christianization smooth. An early bishopric seemingly established in the 860's was swamped in a pagan reaction. The baptism of the princess-regent Olga some one hundred years later likewise failed to anchor the new faith. It was only around 989 that Sviatoslav's bastard son, Vladimir I the Saint, was converted together with his people, accepting the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Constantinople in exchange for an imperial bride.

Under Oleg and his successors, especially after the Magyar move to central Europe and Sviatoslav's sack of the Khazar capital of Itil in 968, Kiev became the chief city of Russia until the latter part of the twelfth century. At no time, however, was it the capital of a centralized state, but rather the senior in an agglomeration of military and commercial city-states, most of them ruled by members of a single dynasty claiming descent from Riurik. Of variable importance at different times, these included Chernigov and Pereiaslav near Kiev; Novgorod and Smolensk in the north; Polotsk and Halicz (Galicia) in the west; Tmutorakan far to the south, and Rostov the great, Riazan, Suzdal, and Vladimir in the East. Hence a centrifugal tendency was an intrinsic part of the early Russian political structure. The death of Vladimir I in 1015 unleashed dissensions among his sons. The murder of two of them, Boris and Gleb, gave Russia its first national saints and earned for their older brother the epithet Sviatopolk the Accursed. The surviving brothers, Iaroslav at Kiev and Mstislav at Tmutorakan, divided the Russian lands along the Dnieper, and only after Mstislav's death without heirs in 1035 did Iaroslav reunite the power into his own hands for some twenty years.



The brilliant reign of Iaroslav the Wise marked the apogee of Kievan Russia and stamped the later culture with many of its characteristics. The authority of the "Great Prince" of Kiev was temporarily unchallenged by the subordinate cities, and his bishop was raised in 1037 to the dignity of a metropolitan, although a brief attempt to substitute a Russian for the tra-

ditional Greek incumbent proved premature Iaroslav expanded the Russian frontiers into the southern steppes and in the direction of Lithuania and Poland. His far-flung political and family connections throw light both on the international aspect of the mid-eleventh-century European world and on Russia's position within it. The old ties of the Riurikids with Scandinavia were still maintained as Northmen came to support Iaroslav against his brother Sviatopolk. The prince's children married in the West as well as in the East: Vsevolod to a Byzantine princess, Anna to King Henry I of France, and Iziaslav to the daughter of Harold Hardrada of England. Most significantly for the future, neither the quarrels with Constantinople over the metropolitan of Kiev nor even a brief war in 1041–1043 could stop the pervasive Byzantine influence on Russian culture. The first systematization of Russian customs, the *Russkaia Pravda*, begun under Iaroslav, bears the stamp of imperial legislation. The Slavonic scriptures of the Cyrillic school had been adopted by the Russians, but the metropolitan remained a Greek under the jurisdiction of the patriarch of Constantinople, and Byzantine canon law governed the Russian Church. The great intellectual and religious center, the Monastery of the Caves, was modeled on the Byzantine community of the Studites. The architecture, mosaic decoration, and the very name of the magnificent new cathedral of Kiev, St. Sophia, underscored its indebtedness to the imperial tradition.

Kievan society, reflected in the compilations of traditional customs, charters, and literary works, was largely urban and aristocratic, but specialists still dispute the relative importance of commerce and agriculture in its economy. In each city, the prince—part war leader, part chief capitalist, through his vast estates and commercial interests—ruled with the help of his retainers or *druzhina*, the advice of the noble council (*duma*), and of the city assembly (*veche*). The countryside paid a tribute which the prince collected at first in person on periodic tours but later received through his local representatives. The old equalitarian clan society of the Slavic tribes had long since given way to a complicated class structure. The *druzhina* and the local nobles eventually coalesced into a single noble class, the boyars, and the city militia with its elected commander was distinct from the prince's foreign followers. Trade guilds and peasant communities represented common interests. The peasants or *smerdy* were personally free and generally unbound to the land, but slaves, half-free indentured servants, and various ecclesiastical classes were also part of the social structure. Considerable variation existed even in this typical pattern, especially in the relations of the prince and the city. Thus in Novgorod, which never received a ruling dynasty, ultimate power rested in the *veche*, and the prince was more an administrator than a ruler. Even in Kiev, the *veche* asserted itself on occasion, meeting without being summoned in 1113 to invite to the city the ruler of its choice.

The death of Iaroslav the Wise in 1054 proved a turning point in Kievan history. His defeat of the Pechenegs brought a new and fiercer Asiatic group, the Polovtsy, called Cumans by the West, into the southern Russian steppes. The newcomers cut off the northern lands politically and commercially, if not culturally, from Byzantium, thus progressively strangling the profitable Kievan trade. The Great Schism of 1054 between Rome and Constantinople eventually forced Russia to choose sides in the religious quarrel. Geographically isolated from the southern Slavs in the Balkans by the Polovtsy, religiously alienated from its western kinsmen in Poland who had thrown in their lot with Rome, Russia gradually withdrew into a separate sphere. Simultaneously, Iaroslav's political testament unwittingly strengthened the latent decentralization of his realm.

My sons [he admonished], I am about to quit this world. Love one another, since ye are brothers by one father and mother. If ye dwell in amity with one another, God will dwell among you, and will subject your enemies to you, and ye will dwell in peace. But if ye dwell in envy and dissension, quarreling with one another, then ye will perish yourselves and bring to ruin the land of your ancestors, which they won at great effort. Wherefore, remain rather at peace, brother heeding brother. The throne of Kiev I bequeath to my eldest son, your brother Iziaslav. Heed him as ye heeded me, that he may take my place among you. To Svyatoslav I give Chernigov, to Vsevolod Pereyaslav, to Igor the city of Vladimir, and to Vyacheslav Smolensk.

It was evidently not Iaroslav's intention to splinter the state and he had reaffirmed the seniority of the "Great Prince" of Kiev, but he proved most accurate in his prophecy of destruction. According to this system of appanages, the princes of the various cities were not to remain in them perpetually but to rotate according to a pattern of seniority, with the eldest member holding Kiev. Unfortunately, the continuous game of musical chairs proved faulty from the start. Some cities, such as Novgorod, remained autonomous and were not included in the system. In others, the ruling family either entrenched itself or sought to wrest more attractive domains from its kinsmen. Twice driven from Kiev, Prince Iziaslav sought the help of the Poles and even attempted to offer his principality to the pope. In 1097, at the Conference of Liubech, the rival princes attempted to resolve the difficulties by halting the carrousel and making the principalities hereditary. Between 1113 and 1125 Vladimir II Monomakh succeeded in reestablishing the preeminence of Kiev. A sense of unity based on a common language and culture, common religious institutions, and inter-related dynasties lingered on. The narrator of the famous *Lay of Igor's Campaign* bitterly denounced in 1185 the quarrels of the princes. But the centrifugal process could not be reversed.

Sacked in 1169 and impoverished by the disappearance of its trade,

Kiev sank slowly into obscurity while rival centers grew on its periphery. Novgorod in the north maintained and expanded the tradition of the merchant republic and kept its ties with the West through its membership in the Hansa. Volynia and Halicz (Galicia) in the southwest were united under Prince Roman of Smolensk (1198–1205) in opposition to Polish and Lithuanian expansionist tendencies. In the northeast, the principality of Vladimir-Suzdal under Prince Andrei Bogolubskii (d. 1174) and his brother Vsevolod “Big Nest” (1176–1212) preserved the tradition of Byzantine absolutism and the old link with the Caucasus and the East through the Volga trade and the marriage of Bogolubskii’s son with Queen Tamar of Georgia.

The Mongol invasion of the thirteenth century dealt the final blow to Kievan culture. The first defeat at the Battle of Kalka in 1223 merely crushed a confederation of Russian princes allied now to the Cumans, but the great raid of Batu’s Golden Horde between 1236 and 1241 overwhelmed the Volga Bulgars, took Riazan and Vladimir, sacked Kiev, and swept through Galicia-Volynia. By 1242 Batu settled in southern Russia, establishing his capital at Sarai on the lower Volga. For two centuries and a half thereafter, the Golden Horde dominated the Russian principalities. Cultural unity was shattered as well. The White Russian lands in the west were gradually absorbed by Lithuania. The Ukrainian territories of Galicia-Volynia, only remotely affected at first, gradually moved into the Latin orbit. The Great Russians of the center and the eastern principality of Vladimir-Suzdal bore the brunt of the “Tartar Yoke.”

Except in the initial devastation and during subsequent punitive expeditions, the Mongol control of Russia was normally exercised at a distance. The khans of the Golden Horde did not attempt to penetrate the forest belt of the north which was unsuited to Mongol cavalry. They merely imposed a heavy poll tax to be collected by the local princes on all their Russian subjects except for the clergy. The princes themselves were forced to obtain their charters or *iarlyks* from the khans, to travel constantly to distant Sarai in order to obtain privileges or to justify their conduct. The coveted title of “Great Prince” and chief tax collector was usually auctioned off to the highest bidder. Much of the central Russian territory of Kiev, Chernigov, and Pereiaslav was turned into pasture land for the nomads as the agricultural population fled northward. Depopulation, economic and cultural regression, and isolation undoubtedly followed, although the final assessment of the Mongol impact on Russian history cannot yet be made.

Of the main surviving principalities, Galicia-Volynia failed to preserve its identity past the fourteenth century as an independent unit. Flourishing at first under Daniel (1235–1265), the son of Roman of Smolensk, who accepted the royal crown of Galicia from Pope Innocent IV in 1253, the

new capital at Lwow became a worthy cultural and commercial successor to Kiev. Then, abandoning its western alignment, sapped internally by the divisive activity of its powerful boyars, and sacked once more by the Mongols in 1282, the principality rapidly disintegrated. Volynia was absorbed by Lithuania, while Galicia fused with Poland in 1387. The Latinization of the boyar ruling class deepened the separation of the area from the Slavic lands to the east.

To Novgorod and its "younger brother" Pskov, protected by their remoteness from direct Mongol interference, fell the task of containing the eastward advance of the Teutonic Knights. In contrast to aristocratic Galicia, the northern cities developed to the maximum their commercial character and attendant republican institutions. The Novgorod *veche* was all-powerful, and the rights of the prince were sharply limited by the treaty inviting him in to rule. The distance from the Mongols made for considerable freedom of action, while the enormous wealth of a trading empire extending deep into Siberia increased Novgorod's power. Under the leadership of Alexander "Nevski," a junior member of the house of Vladimir, the city won its epoch-making victory on the ice of Lake Peipus over the Teutonic Knights in 1242. The danger from the west was over, and Novgorod continued to flourish, although its autonomy was somewhat compromised by Nevski's scrupulous loyalty to the Mongols, while the absence of a central authority gradually helped sap its strength.

The main focus of later history lay in the northeastern Great Russian lands of Vladimir-Suzdal which were directly subject to the Mongols. Repeatedly the princes of the Vladimir family obtained the all-important *iarlyk* of "Great Prince," making them the official representatives of the conquerors. Even though the principality itself was fragmented into appanages according to the old Kievan custom, and the title of prince of Vladimir was more titular than real, the *iarlyk* usually remained within the family. Finally, it came to rest in the very junior branch of Moscow, where Daniel, the youngest son of Alexander Nevski, established in the second half of the thirteenth century a dynasty which successfully freed itself from the Mongols and extended its dominion over the other Russian principalities.

The leadership of Vladimir and especially of Moscow, with its obscure early history, in throwing off the "Tartar Yoke" is an enigma for which many solutions have been proposed: the geographical isolation of the northeast, where the Mongol armies seldom penetrated and to which the population of other regions had fled for refuge; the frontier character of the area, which meant that the authority of the prince would presumably not be hampered by entrenched boyars or *veches*; the development of a feudal hierarchy based on an agricultural-serf economy; the old trade connections

the Russian metropolitanate to Moscow in 1328, asserted its independence by repudiating the Byzantine compromise with Rome at the Council of Florence, and turned its allegiance inward to support the claims of the new champion of Orthodoxy. Finally, the prudent loyalty to the Mongol overlords, maintained until the moment when the disintegration of the Golden Horde made possible the victory of Ivan I's grandson Dimitri Donskoï at the battle of Kulikovo in 1380, enormously enhanced the prestige of Moscow and bolstered its pretensions of sovereignty.

With the reign of Ivan III the Great (1462–1505) and his son Vasili III (1505–1533) the task of Moscow was all but accomplished. Formal submission to the Mongols was repudiated by 1480. Moscow's last Russian rivals, Tver and Novgorod, bowed to its overlordship. Step by step, Lithuania was pushed back from her eastern conquests. Crowned Czar and Autocrat in 1480 after his marriage to the Byzantine heiress Sophia-Zoë Paleologue, Ivan III had made good his claim to be "Lord of all the Russias." Under Ivan IV the Terrible (1533–1584), Moscow finally turned to outward expansion: in the west, in Livonia, in the east and south, against the splintered remains of the Golden Horde—Kazan in 1552 and Astrakhan on the Caspian in 1556. The power of the boyars remained to be crushed, ecclesiastical divisions to be resolved, and the challenge of Poland to be met in the "Time of Troubles" which marked the end of the Riurikid dynasty and the reign of Boris Godunov (1598–1605). But the half-Byzantine half-Oriental czar, supported by a bureaucracy trained in Mongol financial and diplomatic techniques, and by a clergy which developed for his benefit the mythology of the Third Rome, needed only the Western methods imported by Peter the Great to make his autocracy complete.

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